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A

SERIES OF PLAYS:

IN WHICH

IT IS ATTEMPTED TO DELINEATE

THE

STRONGER PASSIONS OF THE MIND.

BY

JOANNA BAILLIE.

VOL. III.

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TO THE READER.

AFTER an interval of nine years, I offer to the Public a third volume of the "Series of Plays;" hoping that it will be received, as the preceding volumes have been, with ſome degree of favour and indulgence. This, I confeſs, is making very ſlow progreſs in my promiſed undertaking; and I could offer ſome reaſonable excuſe for an apparent relaxation of induſtry, were I not afraid it might ſeem to infer a greater degree of expectation or deſire, on the part of my readers, to receive the remainder of the work, than I am at all entitled to ſuppoſe.

With the exception of a ſmall piece, in two acts, at the end of the book, this volume is entirely occupied with different repreſentations of one paſſion; and a paſſion, too, which has been ſuppoſed to be leſs adapted to dramatic purpoſes than any other — Fear. It has been thought that, in Tragedy at leaſt, the principal character could not poſſibly be actuated by this paſſion, without becoming ſo far degraded as to be incapable of engaging the ſympathy and intereſt of the ſpectator or reader. I am, how-

ever, inclined to think, that even Fear, as it is under certain circumſtances and to a certain degree a univerſal paſſion (for our very admiration of Courage reſts upon this idea), is capable of being made in the tragic drama, as it often is in real life, very intereſting, and conſequently not abject.

The firſt of theſe plays is a Tragedy of five acts, the principal character of which is a woman, under the dominion of Superſtitious Fear; and that particular ſpecies of it, (the fear of ghoſts, or the returning dead,) which is ſo univerſal and inherent in our nature, that it can never be eradicated from the mind, let the progreſs of reaſon or philoſophy be what it may. A brave and wiſe man of the 19th century, were he lodged for the night in a lone apartment where murder has been committed, would not ſo eaſily believe, as a brave and wiſe man of the 14th century, that the reſtleſs ſpirit from its grave might ſtalk round his bed and open his curtains in the ſtillneſs of midnight: but ſhould circumſtances ariſe to impreſs him with ſuch a belief, he would feel the emotions of Fear as intenſely, though firmly perſuaded that ſuch beings have no power to injure him. Nay, I am perſuaded that, could we ſuppoſe any perſon with a mind ſo conſtituted as to hold intercourſe with ſuch beings entirely devoid of Fear, we ſhould turn from him with repugnance as ſomething unnatural — as an inſtance of mental monſtroſity. If I am right then in believing

this impreſſion of the mind to be ſo univerſal, I ſhall not be afraid of having ſo far infringed on the dignity of my heroine, as to make her an improper object to excite dramatic intereſt. Thoſe, I believe, who poſſeſs ſtrong imagination, quick fancy, and keen feeling, are moſt eaſily affected by this ſpecies of Fear: I have, therefore, made Orra a lively, cheerful, buoyant character, when not immediately under its influence; and even extracting from her ſuperſtitious propenſity a kind of wild enjoyment, which tempts her to nouriſh and cultivate the enemy that deſtroys her. The cataſtrophe is ſuch as Fear, I underſtand, does more commonly produce than any other paſſion. I have endeavoured to trace the inferior characters of the piece with ſome degree of variety, ſo as to ſtand relieved from the principal figure; but as I am not aware that any particular objection is likely to be made to any of them, they ſhall be left entirely to the mercy of my reader.

But if it has been at all neceſſary to offer any apology for exhibiting Fear as the actuating principle of the heroine of the firſt play, what muſt I ſay in defence of a much bolder ſtep in the one that follows it? in which I have made Fear, and the fear of Death too, the actuating principle of a hero of Tragedy. I can only ſay, that I believed it might be done, without ſubmitting him to any degradation that would affect the ſympathy and intereſt I intended to excite. I muſt confeſs, however, that, being unwilling

to appropriate this paſſion in a ſerious form to my own ſex entirely, when the ſubjects of all the other paſſions, hitherto delineated in this ſeries, are men, I have attempted what did indeed appear at firſt ſight almoſt impracticable. This *eſprit de corps* muſt alſo plead my excuſe for loading the paſſion in queſtion with an additional play. The fear of Death is here exhibited in a brave character, placed under ſuch new and appalling circumſtances as might, I ſuppoſed, overcome the moſt courageous; and as ſoon as he finds himſelf in a ſituation like thoſe in which he has been accuſtomed to be bold, viz. with arms in his hand and an enemy to encounter, he is made immediately to reſume all his wonted ſpirit. Even after he believes himſelf to be ſafe, he returns again to attack, in behalf of his companion, who beſeeches him to fly, and who is not expoſed to any perſonal danger, a force ſo greatly ſuperior to his own as to leave himſelf ſcarcely a chance for redemption.

That great active courage in oppoſing danger, and great repugnance from paſſive endurance and unknown change which are independent of our exertions, are perfectly conſiſtent, is a point, I believe, very well aſcertained. Soldiers, who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves honourably in the field, have died puſillanimouſly on the ſcaffold; while men brought up in peaceful habits, who, without ſome very ſtrong excitement, would have marched with trepidation to

battle, have died under the hands of the executioner with magnanimous compoſure. And, I believe, it has been found by experience, that women have always behaved with as much reſolution and calmneſs in that tremendous ſituation as men; although I do not believe that women, in regard to uncertain danger, even making allowance for their inferior ſtrength and unfavourable habits of life, are ſo brave as men. I have therefore ſuppoſed that, though active and paſſive courage are often united, they frequently exiſt ſeparately, and independently of each other. Nor ought we to be greatly ſurpriſed at this when we conſider, that a man, actively brave, when ſo circumſtanced that no exertion of ſtrength or boldneſs is of any avail, finds himſelf in a new ſituation, contrary to all former experience; and is therefore taken at greater diſadvantage than men of a different character. He, who has leſs of that ſpirit which naturally oppoſes an enemy, and ſtill hopes to overcome while the ſlighteſt probability remains of ſucceſs, has often before, in imagination at leaſt, been in a ſimilar predicament, and is conſequently better prepared for it. But it is not want of fortitude to bear bodily ſufferings, or even deliberately inflicted death, under the circumſtances commonly attending it, that the character of Oſterloo exhibits. It is the horror he conceives on being ſuddenly awakened to the imagination of the awful retributions of another world, from having the firm belief of them forced at once

upon his mind by extraordinary circumſtances, which ſo miſerably quells an otherwiſe undaunted ſpirit. I only contend for the conſiſtency of brave men ſhrinking from paſſive ſufferings and unknown change, to ſhew, that ſo far from tranſgreſſing, I have, in this character, kept much within the bounds which our experience of human nature would have allowed me. If I am tediouſly anxious to vindicate myſelf on this ſubject, let my reader conſider, that I am urged to it from the experience I have had of the great reluctance with which people generally receive characters which are not drawn agreeably to the received rules of dramatic dignity, and common-place heroiſm.

It may be objected that the fear of Death is in him ſo cloſely connected with Superſtitious Fear, that the picture traced in this play bears too near a reſemblance to that which is ſhewn in the foregoing. But the fears of Orra have nothing to do with apprehenſion of perſonal danger, and ſpring ſolely from a natural horror of ſupernatural intercourſe: while thoſe of Oſterloo ariſe, as I have already noticed, from a ſtrong ſenſe of guilt, ſuddenly roufed within him by extraordinary circumſtances; and the proſpect of being plunged, almoſt immediately by death, into an unknown ſtate of puniſhment and horror. Not knowing by what natural means his guilt could be brought to light, in a manner ſo extraordinary, a mind the leaſt ſuperſtitious, in thoſe days, perhaps I may even ſay in theſe, would have

conſidered it to be ſupernatural; and the dreadful conſequences, ſo immediately linked to it, are ſurely ſufficiently ſtrong to unhinge the firmeſt mind, having no time allowed to prepare itſelf for the tremendous change. If there is any perſon, who, under ſuch circumſtances, could have remained unappalled, he does not belong to that claſs of men, who, commanding the fleets and armies of their grateful and admiring country, dare every thing by flood and by field that is dangerous and terrific for her ſake; but to one far different, whom hard drinking, opium, or impiety have ſunk into a ſtate of unmanly and brutiſh ſtupidity. It will probably be ſuppoſed that I have carried the conſequences of his paſſion too far in the cataſtrophe to be conſidered as natural; but the only circumſtance in the piece that is not entirely invention, is the cataſtrophe. The idea of it I received from a ſtory told to me by my mother, many years ago, of a man condemned to the block, who died in the ſame manner; and ſince the play has been written, I have had the ſatiſfaction of finding it confirmed by a circumſtance very ſimilar, related in Miſs Plumtre's intereſting account of the atrocities committed in Lions by the revolutionary tribunals*.

The ſtory of the piece is imaginary, though one of its principal circumſtances, by a coincidence ſomewhat whimſical, I found after it was

* Plumtre's Reſidence in France, vol. i. p. 339.

written to agree with real hiſtory. In looking over Planta's Hiſtory of Switzerland, I found that a violent peſtilence, about the time when I have ſuppoſed it to happen, did actually carry off great multitudes of people in that country *. Had it been a real ſtory, handed down by tradition, the circumſtances of which were believed to be miraculous, I ſhould have allowed it to remain ſo; but not thinking myſelf entitled to aſſume ſo much, I have attempted to trace a natural connection from aſſociation of ideas, by which one thing produces another, or is inſinuated to have done ſo from beginning to end. The only circumſtance that cannot be accounted for on this principle, is the falling of the lot to the guilty hand; and this muſt be conceded to me as a providential direction, or happy coincidence.

* A plague raged in Switzerland in 1349. It was preceded by terrible earthquakes: about a third part of the inhabitants were deſtroyed.

The monaſtery of St. Maurice, where the ſtory of the play is ſuppoſed to have happened, is ſituated in a narrow paſs between lofty precipices, where the Rhone guſhes from the Valais. The founder was Segiſmond, King of Burgundy. It was richly endowed; the monks at one period leading very luxurious lives, hunting and keeping hounds, &c. It was dedicated to St. Maurice and his companions, the holy martyrs of the Theban Legion.

Many of the abbots and priors in Switzerland were, in thoſe days, feudal lords of the empire, and maintained troops of their own. Even ſome of the abbeſſes, preſiding over convents of nuns, were poſſeſſed of the ſame power and privilege.

Contrary to our eſtabliſhed laws of Tragedy, this Play conſiſts only of three acts, and is written in proſe. I have made it ſhort, becauſe I was unwilling to mix any lighter matter with a ſubject ſo ſolemn; and in extending it to the uſual length without doing ſo, it would have been in danger of becoming monotonous and harraſſing. I have written it in proſe, that the expreſſions of the agitated perſon might be plain though ſtrong, and kept as cloſely as poſſible to the ſimplicity of nature. Such a ſubject would, I believe, have been weakened, not enriched, by poetical embelliſhment. Whether I am right or wrong in this opinion, I aſſure my Reader it has not been indolence that has tempted me to depart from common rules.

A Comedy on Fear, the chief character being a man, is not liable to the objections I have ſuppoſed might be made to a Tragedy under the ſame circumſtances. But a very great degree of conſtitutional cowardice would have been a picture too humiliating to afford any amuſement, or even to engage the attention for any conſiderable time. The hero of my third Play, therefore, is repreſented as timid indeed, and endeavouring to conceal it by a boaſtful affectation of gallantry and courage; but at the ſame time, worked upon by artful contrivances to believe himſelf in ſuch a ſituation as would have miſerably overcome many a one, who, on ordinary occaſions of danger, would have behaved with decorum. Cowardice in him has been culti-

vated by indulgence of every kind: and ſelf-conceit and ſelfiſhneſs are the leading traits of his character, which might have been originally trained to uſeful and honourable activity. Fear, in a mixed character of this kind, is, I apprehend, a very good ſubject for Comedy, and in abler hands would certainly have proved itſelf to be ſo.

The laſt Play in the volume is a drama of two acts, the ſubject of which is Hope. This paſſion, when it acts permanently, loſes the character of a paſſion, and when it acts violently is like Anger, Joy, or Grief, too tranſient to become the ſubject of a piece of any length. It ſeemed to me, in fact, neither fit for Tragedy nor Comedy; and like Anger, Joy, or Grief, I once thought to have left it out of my Series altogether. However, what it wanted in ſtrength it ſeemed to have in grace; and being of a noble, kindly and engaging nature, it drew me to itſelf; and I reſolved to do every thing for it that I could, in ſpite of the objections which had at firſt deterred me. The piece is very ſhort, and can neither be called Tragedy nor Comedy. It may indeed appear, for a paſſion ſo much allied to all our cheerful and exhilarating thoughts, to approach too nearly to the former; but Hope, when its object is of great importance, muſt ſo often contend with deſpondency, that it rides like a veſſel on the ſtormy ocean, riſing on the billow's ridge but

for a moment. Cheerfulneſs, the character of common Hope, is, in ſtrong Hope, like glimpſes of ſun-ſhine in a cloudy ſky.

As this paſſion, though more pleaſing, is not ſo powerfully intereſting as thoſe that are more turbulent, and was therefore in danger of becoming languid and tireſome, if long dwelt upon without interruption; and at the ſame time of being ſunk into ſhade or entirely overpowered, if relieved from it by variety of ſtrong marked characters in the inferior perſons of the drama, I have introduced into the ſcenes ſeveral ſongs. So many indeed, that I have ventured to call it a Muſical Drama. I have, however, avoided one fault ſo common, I might ſay univerſal, in ſuch pieces, viz. making people ſing in ſituations in which it is not natural for them to do ſo: and creating a neceſſity for either having the firſt characters performed by thoſe, who can both act and ſing, (perſons very difficult to find,) or permitting them to be made entirely inſipid and abſurd. For this purpoſe, the ſongs are all ſung by thoſe who have little or nothing to act, and introduced when nothing very intereſting is going on. They are alſo ſuppoſed not to be ſpontaneous expreſſions of ſentiment in the ſinger, but (as ſongs in ordinary life uſually are) compoſitions of other people, which have been often ſung before, and are only generally applicable to the preſent occaſion.

The ſtory is imaginary, but I have endeavoured to make it, as far as my information

enabled me, to correſpond with the circumſtances of the time and place in which it is ſuppoſed to have happened.

Having ſaid all that appears to me neceſſary in regard to the contents of the volume, I ſhould now leave my reader to peruſe it without further hindrance; but as this will probably be the laſt volume of Plays I ſhall ever publiſh, I muſt beg to detain him a few moments longer. For I am inclined to think, he may have ſome curioſity to know what is the extent of my plan in a taſk I have ſo far fulfilled; and I ſhall ſatisfy it moſt cheerfully. It is my intention, if I live long enough, to add to this work the paſſions of Remorſe, Jealouſy, and Revenge. Joy, Grief, and Anger, as I have already ſaid, are generally of too tranſient a nature, and are too frequently the attendants of all our other paſſions to be made the ſubjects of an entire play. And though this objection cannot be urged in regard to Pride and Envy, two powerful paſſions which I have not yet named; Pride would make, I ſhould think, a dull ſubject, unleſs it were merely taken as the ground-work of more turbulent paſſions; and Envy, being that ſtate of mind, which, of all others, meets with leaſt ſympathy, could only be endured in Comedy or Farce, and would become altogether diſguſting in Tragedy. I have beſides, in ſome degree, introduced this latter paſſion into the work already, by making it a companion or rather a component part of Hatred. Of all our paſſions, Remorſe

and Jealouſy appear to me to be the beſt fitted for repreſentation. If this be the caſe, it is fortunate for me that I have reſerved them for the end of my taſk; and that they have not been already publiſhed, read, and very naturally laid aſide as unfit for the ſtage, becauſe they have not been produced upon it.

My reader may likewiſe wiſh to know why, having ſo many years ago promiſed to go on publiſhing this work, I ſhould now intend to leave it off, though I ſtill mean to continue writing till it ſhall be compleated; and this ſuppoſed wiſh, I think myſelf bound to gratify. — The Series of Plays was originally publiſhed in the hope that ſome of the pieces it contains, although firſt given to the Public from the preſs, might in time make their way to the ſtage, and there be received and ſupported with ſome degree of public favour. But the preſent ſituation of dramatic affairs is greatly againſt every hope of this kind; and ſhould they ever become more favourable, I have now good reaſon to believe, that the circumſtance of theſe plays having been already publiſhed, would operate ſtrongly againſt their being received upon the ſtage. I am therefore ſtrongly of opinion that I ought to reſerve the remainder of the work in manuſcript, if I would not run the riſk of entirely fruſtrating my original deſign. Did I believe that their having been already publiſhed would not afterwards obſtruct their way to the ſtage, the untowardneſs of preſent circumſtances

ſhould not prevent me from continuing to publiſh.

Having thus given an account of my views and intentions regarding this work, I hope that, ſhould no more of it be publiſhed in my lifetime, it will not be ſuppoſed I have abandoned or become weary of my occupation; which is in truth as intereſting and pleaſing to me now as it was at the beginning.

But when I ſay, preſent circumſtances are unfavourable for the reception of theſe Plays upon the ſtage, let it not be ſuppoſed that I mean to throw any reflection upon the prevailing taſte for dramatic amuſements. The Public have now to chuſe between what we ſhall ſuppoſe are well-written and well-acted Plays, the words of which are not heard, or heard but imperfectly by two thirds of the audience, while the finer and more pleaſing traits of the acting are by a ſtill greater proportion loſt altogether, and ſplendid pantomime, or pieces whoſe chief object is to produce ſtriking ſcenic effect, which can be ſeen and comprehended by the whole. So ſituated, it would argue, methinks, a very pedantic love indeed, for what is called legitimate Drama, were we to prefer the former. A love for active, varied movement in the objects before us; for ſtriking contraſts of light and ſhadow; for ſplendid decorations and magnificent ſcenery, is as inherent in us as the intereſt we take in the repreſentation of the natural paſſions and characters of men: and the moſt

cultivated minds may reliſh ſuch exhibitions, if they do not, when both are fairly offered to their choice, prefer them. Did our ears and our eyes permit us to hear and ſee diſtinctly in a Theatre ſo large as to admit of chariots and horſemen, and all the "pomp and circumſtance of war," I ſee no reaſon why we ſhould reject them. They would give variety, and an appearance of truth to the ſcenes of heroic Tragedy, that would very much heighten its effect. We ought not, then, to find fault with the taſte of the Public for preferring an inferior ſpecies of entertainment, good of its kind, to a ſuperior one, faintly and imperfectly given.

It has been urged, as a proof of this ſuppoſed bad taſte in the Public, by one whoſe judgment on theſe ſubjects is and ought to be high authority, that a play, poſſeſſing conſiderable merit, was produced ſome years ago on Drury-Lane ſtage, and notwithſtanding the great ſupport it received from excellent acting and magnificent decoration, entirely failed. It is very true that, in ſpite of all this, it failed, during the eight nights it continued to be acted, to produce houſes ſufficiently good to induce the Managers to revive it afterwards. But it ought to be acknowledged, that that piece had defects in it as an acting Play, which ſerved to counterbalance thoſe advantages; and likewiſe that, if any ſuppoſed merit in the writing ought to have redeemed thoſe defects, in a theatre, ſo large

and ſo ill calculated to convey ſound as the one in which it was performed, it was impoſſible this could be felt or comprehended by even a third part of the audience.

The ſize of our theatres, then, is what I chiefly allude to, when I ſay, preſent circumſtances are unfavourable for the production of theſe Plays. While they continue to be of this ſize, it is a vain thing to complain either of want of taſte in the Public, or want of inclination in Managers to bring forward new pieces of merit, taking it for granted that there are ſuch to produce. Nothing can be truly reliſhed by the moſt cultivated audience that is not diſtinctly heard and ſeen, and Managers muſt produce what will be reliſhed. Shakeſpeare's Plays, and ſome of our other old Plays, indeed, attract full houſes, though they are often repeated, becauſe, being familiar to the audience, they can ſtill underſtand and follow them pretty cloſely, though but imperfectly heard; and ſurely this is no bad ſign of our public taſte. And beſides this advantage, when a piece is familiar to the audience, the expreſſion of the actors' faces is much better underſtood, though ſeen imperfectly; for the ſtronger marked traits of feeling which even in a large theatre may reach the eyes of a great part of the audience, from the recollection of finer and more delicate indications, formerly ſeen ſo delightfully mingled with them in the ſame countenances during the ſame

paſſages of the Play, will, by aſſociation, ſtill convey them to the mind's eye, though it is the mind's eye only which they have reached.

And this thought leads me to another defect in large theatres, that ought to be conſidered.

Our great tragic actreſs, Mrs. Siddons, whoſe matchleſs powers of expreſſion have ſo long been the pride of our ſtage, and the moſt admired actors of the preſent time, have been brought up in their youth in ſmall theatres, where they were encouraged to enter thoroughly into the characters they repreſented; and to expreſs in their faces that variety of fine fleeting emotion which nature, in moments of agitation, aſſumes, and the imitation of which we are taught by nature to delight in. But ſucceeding actors will only conſider expreſſion of countenance as addreſſed to an audience removed from them to a greater diſtance; and will only attempt ſuch ſtrong expreſſion as can be perceived and have effect at a diſtance. It may eaſily be imagined what exaggerated expreſſion will then get into uſe; and I ſhould think, even this ſtrong expreſſion will not only be exaggerated but falſe. For, as we are enabled to aſſume the outward ſigns of paſſion, not by mimicking what we have beheld in others, but by internally aſſuming, in ſome degree, the paſſion itſelf; a mere outline of it cannot, I apprehend, be given as an outline of figure frequently is, where all that is delineated is true though the whole is not filled up. Nay, beſides having it exaggerated and falſe, it will

perpetually be thruſt in where it ought not to be. For real occaſions of ſtrong expreſſion not occurring often enough, and weaker being of no avail, to avoid an apparent barrenneſs of countenance, they will be tempted to introduce it where it is not wanted, and thereby deſtroy its effect where it is. — I ſay nothing of expreſſion of voice, to which the above obſervations obviouſly apply. This will become equally, if not in a greater degree, falſe and exaggerated, in actors trained from their youth in a large theatre.

But the department of acting that will ſuffer moſt under theſe circumſtances, is that which particularly regards the gradually unfolding of the paſſions, and has, perhaps, hitherto been leſs underſtood than any other part of the art — I mean Soliloquy. What actor in his ſenſes will then think of giving to the ſolitary muſing of a perturbed mind that muttered, imperfect articulation which grows by degrees into words; that heavy, ſuppreſſed voice as of one ſpeaking through ſleep; that rapid burſt of ſounds which often ſucceeds the ſlow languid tones of diſtreſs; thoſe ſudden, untuned exclamations which, as if frightened at their own diſcord, are ſtruck again into ſilence as ſudden and abrupt, with all the correſponding variety of countenance that belongs to it; — what actor, ſo ſituated, will attempt to exhibit all this? No; he will be ſatisfied, after taking a turn or two acroſs the front of the ſtage, to place himſelf directly in

the middle of it; and there, ſpreading out his hands as if he were addreſſing ſome perſon whom it behoved him to treat with great ceremony, to tell to himſelf, in an audible uniform voice, all the ſecret thoughts of his own heart. When he has done this, he will think, and he will think rightly, that he has done enough.

The only valuable part of acting that will then remain to us, will be expreſſion of geſture, grace and dignity, ſuppoſing that theſe alſo ſhall not become affected by being too much attended to and ſtudied.

It may be urged againſt ſuch apprehenſions that, though the theatres of the metropolis ſhould be large, they will be ſupplied with actors, who have been trained to the ſtage in ſmall country-theatres. An actor of ambition (and all actors of genius are ſuch) will practiſe with little heart in the country what he knows will be of no uſe to him on a London ſtage; not to mention that the ſtyle of acting in London will naturally be the faſhionable and prevailing ſtyle elſewhere. Acting will become a leſs reſpectable profeſſion than it has continued to be from the days of Garrick; and the few actors, who add to the natural advantages requiſite to it, the accompliſhments of a ſcholar and a gentleman, will ſoon be wed away by the hand of time, leaving nothing of the ſame ſpecies behind them to ſpring from a neglected and ſapleſs root.

All I have ſaid on this ſubject, may ſtill in a greater degree be applied to actreſſes; for the features and voice of a woman, being naturally more delicate than thoſe of a man, ſhe muſt ſuffer in proportion from the defects of a large theatre.

The great diſadvantage of ſuch over-ſized buildings to natural and genuine acting, is, I believe, very obvious; but they have other defects which are not ſo readily noticed, becauſe they, in ſome degree, run counter to the common opinion of their great ſuperiority in every thing that regards general effect. The diminutive appearance of individual figures, and the ſtraggling poverty of grouping, which unavoidably takes place when a very wide and lofty ſtage is not filled by a great number of people, is very injurious to general effect. This is particularly felt in Comedy, and all plays on domeſtic ſubjects; and in thoſe ſcenes alſo of the grand drama, where two or three perſons only are produced at a time. To give figures who move upon it proper effect, there muſt be depth as well as width of ſtage; and the one muſt bear ſome proportion to the other, if we would not make every cloſer or more confined ſcene appear like a ſection of a long paſſage, in which the actors move before us, apparently in one line, like the figures of a magic lanthorn.

It appears to me, that when a ſtage is of ſuch a ſize that as many perſons as generally come

into action at one time in our grandeſt and beſt-peopled plays, can be produced on the front of it in groups, without crowding together more than they would naturally do any where elſe for the convenience of ſpeaking to one another, all is gained in point of general effect that can well be gained. When modern gentlemen and ladies talk to one another in a ſpacious ſaloon, or when ancient warriors and dames converſed together in an old baronial hall, they do not, and did not ſtand further apart than when converſing in a room of common dimenſions; neither ought they to do ſo on the ſtage. All width of ſtage, beyond what is convenient for ſuch natural grouping, is loſt; and worſe than loſt, for it is injurious. It is continually preſenting us with ſomething ſimilar to that which always offends us in a picture, where the canvas is too large for the ſubject; or in a face, where the features are too ſmall for the bald margin of cheeks and forehead that ſurrounds them.

Even in the ſcenes of profeſſed ſhew and ſpectacle, where nothing elſe is conſidered, it appears to me that a very large ſtage is in ſome degree injurious to general effect. Even when a battle is repreſented in our theatres, the great width of the ſtage is a diſadvantage; for as it never can nor ought to be repreſented but partially, and the part which is ſeen ſhould be crowded and confuſed, opening a large front betrays your want of numbers; or ſhould you be rich enough in this reſpect to fill it ſufficiently,

impoſes upon you a difficulty ſeldom ſurmounted, viz. putting the whole maſs ſufficiently in action to ſuſtain the deception *. When a moderate number of combatants, ſo as to make one connected groupe, are fighting on the front of a moderately wide ſtage, which they ſufficiently occupy, it is an eaſy thing, through the confuſion of their brandiſhed weapons and waving banners, to give the appearance of a deep active battle beyond them, ſeen, as it were, through a narrow paſs; and beholding all the tumult of battle in the ſmall view opened before us, our imagination ſupplies what is hid. If we open a wider view, we give the imagination leſs to do, and ſupply what it would have done leſs perfectly. In narrowing our battle, likewiſe, we could more eaſily throw ſmoke or an appearance of duſt over the back ground, and procure for our fancy an unlimited ſpace.

* The objections above do not apply to ſcenes where ſieges are repreſented; for then the more diminiſhed the actors appear, the greater is the importance and magnitude given to the walls or caſtle which they attack, while the towers and buttreſſes, &c. ſufficiently occupy the width and heighth of the ſtage, and conceal the want of numbers and general activity in the combatants. And the managers of our preſent large theatre have, in my opinion, ſhewn great judgment in introducing into their mixed pieces of late ſo many good ſcenes of this kind, that have, to my fancy at leaſt, afforded a grand and animating ſhew. Nor do they fairly apply to thoſe combats or battles into which horſes are introduced; for a moderate number of thoſe noble animals may be made to occupy and animate, in one connected groupe, the front of the wideſt ſtage that we are in danger of having, and to conceal the want of a numerous hoſt and tumultuous battle behind them.

In proceſſions, alſo, the moſt pleaſing effect to our imaginations is, when the marſhalled figures are ſeen in long perſpective which requires only depth of ſtage; and the only advantage a wide ſtage has on ſuch occaſions is containing the aſſembled maſs of figures, when the moving line ſtops and gathers itſelf together on the front. The rich confuſion of ſuch a crowd is indeed very brilliant and pleaſing for a ſhort time, but it is dearly purchaſed at the price of many ſacrifices.

On thoſe occaſions too, when many people are aſſembled on the front of the ſtage to give ſplendour and importance to ſome particular ſcene, or to the concluſion of a piece, the general effect is often injured by great width of ſtage. For the crowd is ſuppoſed to be attracted to the ſpot by ſomething which engages their attention; and, as they muſt not ſurround this object of attention, (which would be their natural arrangement,) leſt they ſhould conceal it from the audience, they are obliged to ſpread themſelves out in a long ſtraight line on each ſide of it: now the ſhorter thoſe lines or wings are, ſpreading out from the centre figures, the leſs do they offend againſt natural arrangement, and the leſs artificial and formal does the whole ſcene appear.

In ſhort, I ſcarcely know of any advantage which a large ſtage poſſeſſes over one of a moderate ſize without great abatements, even in

regard to general effect, unleſs it be when it is empty, and ſcenery alone engages our attention, or when figures appear at a diſtance on the back ground only. Something in confirmation of what I have been ſaying, has, perhaps, been felt by moſt people on entering a grand cathedral, where, figures moving in the long aiſles at a diſtance, add grandeur to the building by their diminiſhed appearance; but in approaching near enough to become themſelves diſtinct objects of attention, look ſtunted and mean, without ſerving to enlarge by compariſon its general dimenſions.

There is alſo, I apprehend, greater difficulty, in a very wide and lofty ſtage, to produce variety of light and ſhadow; and this often occaſions the more ſolemn ſcenes of Tragedy to be repreſented in a full, ſtaring, uniform light that ought to be dimly ſeen in twilight uncertainty; or to have the objects on them ſhewn by partial gleams only, while the deepened ſhade around gives a ſombre indiſtinctneſs to the other parts of the ſtage, particularly favourable to ſolemn or terrific impreſſions. And it would be more difficult, I imagine, to throw down light upon the objects on ſuch a ſtage, which I have never indeed ſeen attempted in any theatre, though it might ſurely be done in one of moderate dimenſions with admirable effect. In ſhort, a great variety of pleaſing effects from light and ſhadow might be more eaſily produced on a

ſmaller ſtage, that would give change and even intereſt to pieces otherwiſe monotonous and heavy; and would often be very uſeful in relieving the exhauſted ſtrength of the chief actors, while want of ſkill in the inferior could be craftily concealed*. On this part of the ſubject, however, I ſpeak with great diffidence, not knowing to what perfection machinery for the management of light may be brought in a large theatre. But at the ſame time, I am certain that, by a judicious uſe of light and ſcenery, an artificial magnitude may be given to a ſtage of a moderate ſize, that would, to the eye, as far as diſtance in perſpective is concerned, have an effect almoſt equal to any thing that can be produced on a larger ſtage: for that apparent magnitude ariſing from ſucceſſion of objects, depends upon the depth of the ſtage, much more than its width and loftineſs, which are often detrimental to it; and a ſmall or moderate ſized theatre may have, without injury to proportion, a very deep ſtage.

It would be, I believe, impertinent to purſue this ſubject any farther; and I beg pardon for having obtruded it ſo far where it may not appear naturally to be called for. I plead in my excuſe an almoſt irreſiſtible deſire to expreſs my thoughts, in ſome degree, upon what has occupied them conſiderably; and a ſtrong perſuaſion that I ought not, how unimportant ſoever they may be, entirely to conceal them.

* See Note at the end.

I muſt now beg leave to return my thanks to the Public for that indulgent favour which for ſo many years has honoured and cheered my labour; and whether more or leſs liberally dealt to me, has at all times been ſufficient to prevent me from laying down my pen in deſpair. Favour, which has gratified me the more ſenſibly, becauſe I have ſhared it with cotemporary writers of the higheſt poetic genius, whoſe claims to ſuch diſtinction are ſo powerful.

NOTE.

That ſtrong light caſt up from lamps on the front of the ſtage which has long been in uſe in all our theatres, is certainly very unfavourable to the appearance and expreſſion of individual actors, and alſo to the general effect of their grouped figures. When a painter wiſhes to give intelligence and expreſſion to a face, he does not make his lights hit upon the under part of his chin, the noſtrils, and the under curve of the eyebrows, turning of courſe all the ſhadows upwards. He does the very reverſe of all this; that the eye may look hollow and dark under the ſhade of its brow; that the ſhadow of the noſe may ſhorten the upper lip, and give a greater character of ſenſe to the mouth; and that any fulneſs of the under chin may be the better concealed. From this diſpoſition of the light in our theatres, whenever an actor, whoſe features are not particularly ſharp and pointed, comes near the front of the ſtage, and turns his face fully to the audience, every feature immediately becomes ſhortened and ſnub, and leſs capable of any expreſſion, unleſs it be of the ludicrous kind. This at leaſt will be the effect produced to thoſe who are ſeated under or on the ſame level with the ſtage, making now a conſiderable proportion of an audience; while to thoſe who ſit above it, the lights and ſhadows, at variance with the natural bent of the features, will make the whole face appear confuſed, and (compared to what it would have been with light thrown upon it from another direction) unintelligible. —— As to the general effect of grouped figures: cloſe groupes or crowds, ranged on the front of the ſtage, when the light is thrown up upon them, have a harſh flaring appearance; for the foremoſt figures catch the light, and are too much diſtinguiſhed from thoſe behind, from whom it is intercepted. But when the light is thrown down upon the objects, this cannot be the caſe: for then it will glance along the heads of the whole crowd, even to the very bottom of the ſtage, preſenting a varied harmonious maſs of figures to the eye, deep, mellow and brilliant.

It may, perhaps, be objected to theſe laſt obſervations, that the moſt popular of our night ſcenes in nature, and thoſe which have been moſt frequently imitated by the painter, are groupes of

figures with ſtrong light thrown up upon them, ſuch as gypſies or banditti round a fire, or villagers in a ſmith's forge, &c. But the ſtriking and pleaſing effect of ſuch ſcenes is owing to the deep darkneſs which ſurrounds them; while the aſcending ſmoke, tinged with flame-colour in the one caſe, and the rafters or higher parts of the wall catching a partial gleam in the other, connect the brilliant colouring of the figures with the deep darkneſs behind them, which would elſe appear hard and abrupt, and thus at the ſame time produce ſtrong contraſt with harmonious gradation. I need ſcarcely mention, for it is almoſt too obvious, that the effect of the light ſo thrown on the faces of thoſe figures abundantly confirm my firſt obſervations, regarding the features and expreſſion of individuals faces. Yet I do not mean to ſay that light thrown up from the front of a ſtage, where light is alſo admitted from many other quarters, can have ſo ſtrong an effect upon the countenances as in ſuch ſituations.

Groupes of gypſies, &c. are commonly compoſed but of one circle of figures; for did they amount to any thing like a deepened groupe or crowd, the figures behind would be almoſt entirely loſt. But thoſe grand night-ſcenes containing many figures which we admire in nature or in painting, — proceſſions by torch-light or in an illuminated ſtreet,— crowds gathered to behold a conflagration, &c. always have the light thrown down upon them. — It may be urged indeed that the greater part of our ſtage-ſcenes are meant to repreſent day and not night, ſo that the obſervations above are but partially applicable. It is very true that ſtage-ſcenes generally are ſuppoſed to be ſeen by day-light; but day-light comes from heaven, not from the earth; even within-doors our whitened ceilings are made to throw down reflected light upon us, while our pavements and carpets are of a darker colour.

In what way this great defect of all our theatres could be rectified, I am not at all competent to ſay. Yet, I ſhould ſuppoſe, that by bringing forward the roof of the ſtage as far as its boards or floor, and placing a row of lamps with reflectors along the inſide of the wooden front-piece, ſuch a light as is wanted might be procured. The green curtain in this caſe behoved not to be let down, as it now is, from the front-piece, but ſome feet within it; and great care taken that nothing ſhould be placed

near the lamps capable of catching fire. If this were done, no boxes, I ſuppoſe, could be made upon the ſtage; but the removal of ſtage-boxes would in itſelf be a great advantage. The front-piece at the top; the boundary of the ſtage from the orcheſtra at the bottom; and the pilaſters on each ſide, would then repreſent the frame of a great moving picture, entirely ſeparated and diſtinct from the reſt of the theatre: whereas, at preſent, an unnatural mixture of audience and actors, of houſe and ſtage takes place near the front of the ſtage, which deſtroys the general effect in a very great degree.

ORRA:

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

HUGHOBERT, *Count of* Aldenberg.

GLOTTENBAL, *his Son.*

THEOBALD OF FALKENSTEIN, *a Nobleman of reduced Fortune, and Co-burgher of Baſle.*

RUDIGERE, *a Knight, and Commander of one of the Free Companies returned from the Wars, and Baſtard of a Branch of the Family of* Aldenberg.

HARTMAN, *friend of* Theobald, *and Banneret of Baſle.*

URSTON, *a Confeſſor.*

FRANKO, *Chief of a Band of Outlaws.*

MAURICE, *an Agent of* Rudigere's.

Soldiers, Vaſſals, Outlaws, &c.

WOMEN.

ORRA, *Heireſs of another Branch of the Family of* Aldenberg, *and Ward to* Hughobert.

ELEANORA, *Wife to* Hughobert.

CATHRINA, ALICE, } *Ladies attending on* Orra.

Scene, *Switzerland, in the Canton of Baſle, and afterwards in the Borders of the Black Foreſt in Suabia.*

Time, *towards the end of the 14th Century.*

ORRA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An open Space before the Walls of a Caſtle, with wild Mountains beyond it; enter* GLOTTENBAL, *armed as from the Liſts, but bare-headed and in Diſorder, and his Arms ſoiled with Earth or Sand, which an Attendant is now and then bruſhing off, whilſt another follows bearing his Helmet; with him enters* MAURICE, *followed by* RUDIGERE, *who is alſo armed, and keeps by himſelf, pacing to and fro at the bottom of the Stage, whilſt the others come forward.*

GLOTTENBAL (*ſpeaking as he enters, loud and boaſtingly*)

AYE, let him triumph in his paltry honours,
Won by mere trick and accident. Good faith!
It were a ſhame to call it ſtrength or ſkill.
Were it not, Rudigere?

(*Calling to* Rudigere, *who anſwers not.*)

Maur. His brow is dark, his tongue is lock'd, my Lord;
There come no words from him; he bears it not
So manfully as thou doſt, noble Glottenbal.

Glot. Fy on't! I mind it not.

Maur. And wherefore ſhould'ſt thou? This
ſame Theobald,
Count and co-burgher — mixture moſt unſeemly
Of baſe and noble, — know we not right well
What powers aſſiſt him? Mark'd you not, my
Lord,
How he did turn him to the witchy north,
When firſt he mounted; making his fierce ſteed,
That paw'd and rear'd and ſhook its harneſſ'd
neck
In generous pride, bend meekly to the earth
Its mained creſt, like one who made obeiſance?
Glot. Ha! did'ſt thou really ſee it?
Maur. Yes, brave Glottenbal,
I did right truly; and beſides myſelf,
Many obſerv'd it.
Glot. Then 'tis manifeſt
How all this foil hath been. Who e'er before
Saw one with ſuch advantage of the field,
Loſe it ſo ſhamefully? By my good fay!
Barring foul play and other dev'liſh turns,
I'd keep my courſer's back with any Lord,
Or Knight, or Squire that e'er beſtrode a ſteed.
Think'ſt thou not, honeſt Maurice, that I could?
Maur. Who doubts it, good my Lord? This
Falkenſtein
Is but a clown to you.
Glot. Well let him boaſt.
Boaſting I ſcorn; but I will ſhortly ſhew him
What theſe good arms, with no foul play againſt
them,
Can honeſtly atchieve.

Maur. Yes, good my Lord; but chuſe you well your day:
A moonleſs Friday luck did never bring
To honeſt combatant.

Glot. Ha! bleſſing on thee! I ne'er thought of this:
Now it is clear how our miſchance befell.
Be ſure thou tell to every one thou meet'ſt,
Friday and a dark moon ſuit Theobald.
Ho! Rudigere! hear'ſt thou not this?

Rud. (*as he goes off, aſide to* Maurice)
Flatter the fool a while and let me go,
I cannot join thee now. [EXIT.

Glot. (*looking after* Rudigere)
Is he ſo creſt-fallen?

Maur. He lacks your noble ſpirit.

Glot. Fy upon't!
I heed it not. Yet, by my ſword and ſpurs!
'Twas a foul turn, that for my rival earn'd
A branch of victory from Orra's hand.

Maur. Aye, foul indeed! My blood boil'd high to ſee it.
Look where he proudly comes.

Enter THEOBALD *arm'd, with Attendants, having a green ſprig ſtuck in his helmet.*

Glot. (*going up to* Theobald)
Comeſt thou to face me ſo? Audacious Burgher!
The Lady Orra's favour ſuits thee not,
Tho' for a time thou haſt upon me gain'd
A ſeeming 'vantage.

The. A ſeeming 'vantage!—Then it is not true,
That thou, unhors'd, layd'ſt rolling in the duſt,

Aſking for quarter?—Let me crave thy pardon!
Some ſtrange deluſion hung upon our ſight
That we believed it ſo.
Glot. Off with thy taunts!
And pull that ſprig from its audacious perch:
The favour of a Dame too high for thee.
Theo. Too high indeed; and had'ſt thou alſo added,
Too good, too fair, I had aſſented to it.
Yet, be it known unto your courteous worth,
That were this ſprig a Queen's gift, or received
From the brown hand of ſome poor mountain maid;
Yea, or beſtow'd upon my rambling head,
As in the hairy ſides of brouzing kid
The wild roſe ſticks a ſpray, unprized, unbidden,
I would not give it thee.
Glot. Doſt thou ſo face me out? Then I will have it. (*Snatching at it with rage.*)

Enter HARTMAN.

Hart. (*ſeparating them*)
What! Malice after fighting in the liſts
As noble courteous knights!
Glot. (*to* Hartman) Go, paltry Banneret!
Such friends as thou
Become ſuch Lords as he, whoſe ruined ſtate
Seeks the baſe fellowſhip of reſtleſs burghers;
Thinking to humble ſtill, with envious ſpite,
The great and noble houſes of the land.
I know ye well, and I defy you both,
With all your damned witchery to-boot.
[EXIT *grumbling, followed by* Maurice, *&c.*

Manent Theobald *and* Hartman.

Theo. How fierce the creature is, and full of folly!
Like a ſhent cur to his own door retired,
That briſtles up his furious back, and there
Each paſſenger annoys. — And this is he,
Whom ſordid and ambitious Hughobert,
The guardian in the ſelfiſh father ſunk,
Deſtines for Orra's huſband. — O foul ſhame!
The carrion-crow and royal eagle join'd,
Make not ſo croſs a match. — But think'ſt thou, Hartman,
She will ſubmit to it?

Hart. That may be as thou pleaſeſt, Falkenſtein.

Theo. Away with mockery!

Hart. I mock thee not.

Theo. Nay, Banneret, thou doſt. Saving this favour,
Which every victor in theſe liſted combats
From Ladies' hands receive, nor then regard
As more than due and ſtated courteſy,
She ne'er hath honour'd me with word or look
Such hope to warrant.

Hart. Wait not thou for looks.

Theo. Thou would'ſt not have me to a Dame like this,
With rich domains and titled rights encompaſs'd,
Theſe ſimple limbs, girt in their ſoldier's gear,
My barren hills and ruin'd tower preſent,
And ſay, "Accept — theſe will I nobly give
In fair exchange for thee and all thy wealth."

No, Rudolph, Hartman, woo the maid thyſelf,
If thou haſt courage for it.

Hart. Yes, Theobald of Falkenſtein, I will,
And win her too; but all for thy behoof.
And when I do preſent, as thou haſt ſaid,
Thoſe ſimple limbs, girt in their ſoldier's geer,
Adding thy barren hills and ruin'd tower,
With ſome few items more of gen'rous worth
And native ſenſe and manly fortitude;
I'll give her in return for all that ſhe
Or any maid can in ſuch barter yield,
Its fair and ample worth.

Theo. So doſt thou reckon.

Hart. And ſo will Orra. Do not ſhake thy head.
I know the maid: for ſtill ſhe has received me
As one who knew her noble father well,
And in the bloody field in which he died
Fought by his ſide, with kind familiarity:
And her ſtern guardian, viewing theſe grey hairs
And this rough viſage with no jealous eye,
Hath ſtill admitted it. —— I'll woo her for thee.

Theo. I do in truth believe thou mean'ſt me well.

Hart. And this is all thou ſay'ſt? Cold frozen words!
What has bewitch'd thee, man? Is ſhe not fair?

Theo. O fair indeed as woman need be form'd
To pleaſe and be belov'd! Tho', to ſpeak honeſtly,
I've fairer ſeen; yet ſuch a form as Orra's

For ever in my buſy fancy dwells,
Whene'er I think of wiving my lone ſtate.
It is not this; ſhe has too many lures;
Why wilt thou urge me on to meet her ſcorn?
I am not worthy of her.

Hart. (*puſhing him away with gentle anger*)
Go to! I praiſed thy modeſty ſhort-while,
And now with dull and ſenſeleſs perſeverance,
Thou would'ſt o'erlay me with it. Go thy ways!
If thro' thy fault, thus ſhrinking from the onſet,
She with that furious cub be match'd, 'twill reſt
Upon thy conſcience like a damning ſin,
And may it gnaw thee ſhrewdly!

[EXEUNT.

SCENE II.

A ſmall Apartment in the Caſtle, enter RUDIGERE *muſing gloomily, and muttering to himſelf ſome time before he ſpeaks aloud.*

Rud. No no; it is to formleſs air diſſolved,
This cheriſh'd hope, this viſion of my brain!
(*Pacing to and fro, and then ſtopping and muſing as before.*)
I daily ſtood contraſted in her ſight
With an ungainly fool; and when ſhe ſmiled,
Methought——But wherefore ſtill upon this thought,
Which was perhaps but a deluſion then,
Brood I with ceaſeleſs torment? Never, never!
O never more on me, from Orra's eye,
Approving glance ſhall light, or gentle look!

This day's diſgrace mars all my goodly dreams.
My path to greatneſs is at once ſhut up.
Still in the duſt my grovling fortune lies.
(*Striking his breaſt in deſpair*)
Tame thine aſpiring ſpirit, luckleſs wretch!
There is no hope for thee!
And ſhall I tame it? No, by ſaints and devils!
The laws have caſt me off from every claim
Of houſe and kindred, and within my veins
Turn'd noble blood to baſeneſs and reproach:
I'll caſt them off: why ſhould they be to me
A bar, and no protection?
(*Pacing again to and fro, and muttering low for ſome time before he ſpeaks aloud*)
Aye; this may ſtill within my toils enthral her:
This is the weakneſs of her mind, on which
I'll clutch my hold.

Enter CATHRINA *behind him, laying her hand upon him.*

Cath. Ha! ſpeak'ſt thou to thyſelf?
Rud. (*ſtarting*) I did not ſpeak.
Cath. Thou did'ſt; thy buſy mind gave ſound to thoughts
Which thou did'ſt utter with a thick harſh voice,
Like one who ſpeaks in ſleep. Tell me their meaning.
Rud. And doſt thou ſo preſume? Be wiſe; be humble.
(*After a pauſe*)
Has Orra oft of late requeſted thee

To tell her ſtories of the reſtleſs dead?
Of ſpectres riſing at the midnight watch
By the lone trav'llers' bed?

Cath. Wherefore of late doſt thou ſo oft enquire
Of what ſhe ſays and does?

Rud. Be wiſe, and anſwer what I aſk of thee;
This is thy duty now.

Cath. Alas, alas! I know that one falſe ſtep
Has o'er me ſet a ſtern and ruthleſs maſter.

Rud. No, madam; 'tis thy grave and virtuous ſeeming;
Thy ſaint-like carriage, rigid and demure,
On which thy high repute ſo long has ſtood,
Endowing thee with right of cenſorſhip
O'er every ſimple maid, whoſe cheerful youth
Wears not ſo thick a maſk, that o'er thee ſets
This ruthleſs maſter. Hereon reſts my power:
I might expoſe, and therefore I command thee.

Cath. Huſh, huſh! approaching ſteps! They'll find me here!
I'll do whate'er thou wilt.

Rud. It is but Maurice: hie thee to thy cloſet,
Where I will ſhortly come to thee. Be thou
My faithful agent in a weighty matter,
On which I now am bent, and I will prove
Thy ſtay and ſhelter from the world's contempt.

Cath. Maurice to find me here! Where ſhall I hide me?

Rud. Nowhere, but boldly paſs him as he enters.

I'll find ſome good excuſe; he will be ſilent:
He is my agent alſo.

Cath. Doſt thou truſt him?

Red. Avarice his maſter is as ſhame is thine:
Therefore I truſt to deal with both. — Away!

(*Enter* MAURICE, *paſſing* CATHRINA *as ſhe goes out.*)

Maur. What, doth the grave and virtuous Cathrina,
Vouchſafe to give thee of her company?

Rud. Yes, rigid ſaint! ſhe has beſtowed upon me
Some grave advice to bear with pious meekneſs
My late diſcomfiture.

Maur. Aye, and ſhe call'd it,
I could be ſworn! heaven's judgment on thy pride.

Rud. E'en ſo: thou'ſt gueſſed it. — Shall we to the ramparts
And meet the weſtern breeze?

[EXEUNT.

SCENE III.

A ſpacious Apartment; enter HUGHOBERT and URSTON.

Hugh. (*ſpeaking with angry geſticulation as he enters*)
I feed and clothe theſe drones, and in return
They cheat, deceive, abuſe me; nay, belike,
Laugh in their ſleeve the while. By their advice,
This curſed tourney I proclaim'd; for ſtill

They puffed me up with praiſes of my ſon —
His grace, his ſkill in arms, his horſemanſhip —
Count Falkenſtein to him was but a clown —
And ſo, in Orra's eyes to give him honour,
Full ſurely did I think — I'll hang them all!
I'll ſtarve them in a dungeon ſhut from light:
I'll heap my boards no more with dainty fare
To feed falſe flatterers.

Urſt. That indeed were wiſe:
But art thou ſure, when men ſhall ſpeak the truth,
That thou wilt feed them for it? I but hinted
In gentle words to thee, that Glottenbal
Was praiſed with partial or affected zeal,
And thou receiv'dſt it angrily.

Hugh. Aye, true indeed: but thou did'ſt ſpeak of him
As one bereft of all capacity.
Now tho', God wot! I look on his defects
With no blind love, and even in my ire
Will ſometimes call him fool; yet, ne'ertheleſs,
He ſtill has parts and talents, tho' obſcured
By ſome untoward failings. — Heaven be praiſed!
He wants not ſtrength at leaſt and well turn'd limbs,
Had they but taught him how to uſe them. Knaves!
They have neglected him.

(*Enter* GLOTTENBAL, *who draws back on ſeeing his Father.*)

Advance, young Sir: art thou afraid of me?

That thus thou ſhrinkeſt like a ſculking thief
To make diſgrace the more apparent on thee?
Glot. Yes, call it then diſgrace, or what you pleaſe;
Had not my lance's point ſomewhat awry
Glanced on his ſhield ——
Hugh. E'en ſo; I doubt it not;
Thy lances point, and every thing about thee
Hath glanced awry. Go, rid my houſe, I ſay,
Of all thoſe feaſting flatterers that deceive thee;
They harbour here no more: diſmiſs them quickly.
Glot. Do it yourſelf, my Lord; you are, I trow,
Angry enough to do it ſharply.
Hugh. (*turning to* Urſton) Faith!
He gibes me fairly here; there's reaſon in't;
Fools ſpeak not thus. (*to* Glottenbal) Go to! if I am angry,
Thou art a graceleſs ſon to tell me ſo.
Glot. Have you not bid me ſtill to ſpeak the truth?
Hugh. (*to* Urſton) Again thou hear'ſt he makes an apt reply.
Urſt. He wants not words.
Hugh. Nor meaning neither, Father.

Enter ELEANORA.

Well Dame; where haſt thou been?
El. I came from Orra.
Hugh. Haſt thou been pleading in our ſon's excuſe?

And how did ſhe receive it?

El. I tried to do it, but her preſent humour
Is jeſt and merriment. She is behind me,
Stopping to ſtroke a hound, that in the corridor
Came to her fawningly to be careſt.

Glot. (*liſtening*) Aye ſhe is coming; light and quick her ſteps;
So found they, when her ſpirits are unruly.
But I am bold; ſhe ſhall not mock me now.

(*Enter* ORRA, *tripping gayly, and playing with the folds of her ſcarf.*)

Methinks you trip it briſkly, gentle Dame.

Or. Does it offend you, noble Knight.

Glot. Go to!
I know your meaning. Wherefore ſmile you ſo?

Or. Becauſe, good ſooth! with tired and aching ſides
I have not power to laugh.

Glot. Full well I know why thou ſo merry art.
Thou think'ſt of him to whom thou gav'ſt that ſprig
Of hopeful green, his ruſty caſque to grace,
Whilſt at thy feet his honour'd glave he laid.

Or. Nay, rather ſay, of him, who at my feet,
From his proud courſer's back, more gallantly
Laid his moſt precious ſelf; then ſtole away,
Thro' modeſty, unthank'd, nor left behind
Of all his geer that flutter'd in the duſt,
Or glove or band, or fragment of torn hoſe,
For dear remembrance-ſake, that in my ſleeve

I might have ſtuck it. O! thou wrong'ſt me much
To think my merriment a ref'rence hath
To any one but him. (*Laughing.*)
El. Nay Orra; theſe wild fits of uncurb'd laughter,
Athwart the gloomy tenor of your mind,
As it has low'r'd of late, ſo keenly caſt,
Unſuited ſeem and ſtrange.
Or. O nothing ſtrange, my gentle Eleanora!
Did'ſt thou ne'er ſee the ſwallows veering breaſt,
Winging the air beneath ſome murky cloud
In the ſunn'd glimpſes of a ſtormy day,
Shiver in ſilv'ry brightneſs?
Or boatman's oar as vivid lightning flaſh
In the faint gleam, that like a ſpirit's path
Tracks the ſtill waters of ſome ſullen lake?
Or lonely Tower, from its brown maſs of woods,
Give to the parting of a wintry ſun
One haſty glance in mockery of the night
Cloſing in darkneſs round it? — Gentle Friend!
Chide not her mirth, who was ſad yeſterday,
And may be ſo to-morrow.
Glot. And wherefore art thou ſad, unleſs it is
From thine own way-ward humour? Other Dames
Were they ſo courted, would be gay and happy.
Or. Wayward it needs muſt be, ſince I am ſad
When ſuch perfection woos me.
Pray good Glottenbal,

How did'ſt thou learn with ſuch a wond'rous grace
To toſs thy armed heels up in the air,
And clutch with outſpread hands the ſlipp'ry ſand?
I was the more amaz'd at thy dexterity,
As this, of all the feats which thou, before-hand,
Did'ſt promiſe to perform, moſt modeſtly,
Thou did'ſt forbear to mention,
Glot. Gibe away!
I care not for thy gibing. With fair liſts
And no black arts againſt me ——
Hugh. (*advancing angrily from the bottom of the ſtage to* Glottenbal,)
Hold thy peace!
(*To* Orra) And, Madam, be at leaſt ſomewhat reſtrained
In your unruly humour.
Or. Pardon, my Lord: I knew not you were near me.
My humour is unruly: with your leave,
I will retire till I have curb'd it better.
(*To* Eleanora.) I would not loſe your company, ſweet Counteſs.
El. We'll go together then.
[EXEUNT Orra *and* Eleanora.
(*Manet* Hughobert; *who paces angrily about the ſtage, while* Glottenbal *ſtands on the front, thumping his legs with his ſheath'd rapier.*)
There is no ſtriving with a forward girl,
Nor puſhing on a fool. My haraſſed life,
Day after day, more irkſome grows. — Curs'd bane!
I'll toil no more for this untoward match.

(*Enter* RUDIGERE, *ſtealing behind and liſtening.*)

Rud. You are diſturb'd, my Lord.

Hugh. What is it thou? I am diſturbed in-
ſooth!

Rud. Aye, Orra has been here, and ſome
light words
Of girliſh levity have mov'd you. How!
Toil for this match no more! What elſe remains,
If this ſhould be abandon'd, noble Aldenberg!
That can be worth your toil?

Hugh. I'll match the cub elſewhere.

Rud. What call ye matching?

Hugh. Surely for him ſome other virtuous
maid
Of high deſcent, tho' not ſo richly dowried,
May be obtain'd.

Rud. Within your walls, perhaps,
Some waiting gentle-woman, who perchance
May be ſome fifty generations back
Deſcended from a king, he will himſelf,
Ere long obtain, without your aid, my Lord.

Hugh. Thou mak'ſt me mad! the dolt! the
ſenſeleſs dolt!
What can I do for him? I cannot force
A noble maid entruſted to my care.
I, the ſole guardian of her helpleſs youth.

Rud. That were indeed unfit: but there are
means
To make her yield conſent.

Hugh. Then by my faith, good friend, I'll
call thee wizard,
If thou can'ſt find them out. What means
already,

Short of compulſion, have we left untried?
And now the term of my authority
Wears to its cloſe.
Rud. I know it well; and therefore powerful means,
And of quick operation, muſt be ſought.
Hugh. Speak plainly to me?
Rud. I have watch'd her long.
I've ſeen her cheek fluſh'd with the roſy glow
Of jocund ſpirits, deadly pale become
At tale of nightly ſprite or apparition,
Such as all hear, 'tis true, with greedy ears,
Saying, "Saints ſave us!" but forget as quickly.
I've mark'd her long: ſhe has, with all her ſhrewdneſs
And playful merriment, a gloomy fancy,
That broods within itſelf on fearful things.
Hugh. And what doth this avail us?
Rud. Hear me out.
Your ancient caſtle in the Suabian foreſt
Hath, as too well you know, belonging to it,
Or falſe or true, frightful reports. There hold her
Strictly confined in ſombre baniſhment;
And doubt not but ſhe will, ere long, full gladly
Her freedom purchaſe at the price you name.
Hugh. On what pretence can I confine her there?
It were moſt odious.
Rud. Can pretence be wanting?
Has ſhe not favour ſhewn to Theobald,

Who in your neighbourhood, with his ſworn friend
The Banneret of Baſle, ſuſpiciouſly
Prolongs his ſtay? A poor and paltry Count,
Unmeet to match with her. And want ye then
A reaſon for removing her with ſpeed
To ſome remoter quarter? Out upon it!
You are too ſcrupulous.

Hugh. Thy ſcheme is good, but cruel.

(Glottenbal—*who has been drawing nearer to them, and attending to the laſt part of their diſcourſe.*)

Glot. O much I like it, dearly wicked Rudigere!
She then will turn her mind to other thoughts
Than ſcornful gibes at me.

Hugh. I to her father ſwore I would protect her:
I would fulfill his will.

Rud. And, in that will, her father did deſire
She might be match'd with this your only ſon;
Therefore you're firmly bound all means to uſe
That may the end attain.

Hugh. Walk forth with me, we'll talk of this at large.

[EXEUNT Hugh. *and* Rud.

(*Manet* Glottenbal, *who comes forward from the bottom of the ſtage with the action of a knight advancing to the charge.*)

Yes, thus it is: I have the ſlight o't now:
And were the combat yet to come, I'd ſhew them
I'm not a whit behind the braveſt knight,
Croſs luck excepted.

Enter MAURICE.

Maur. My Lord, indulge us of your courteſy.

Glot. In what I pray?

Maur. Did not Fernando tell you?
We are all met within our ſocial bower;
And I have wager'd on your head, that none
But you alone, within the Count's domains,
Can to the bottom drain the chaſed horn.
Come; do not linger here when glory calls you.

Glot. Thinkſt thou that Theobald could drink ſo ſtoutly?

Maur. He, paltry chief! he herds with ſober burghers;
A goblet, half its ſize, would conquer him.

[EXEUNT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Garden with Trees and Shrubs, &c.* ORRA, THEOBALD, *and* HARTMAN *are discovered in a shaded Walk at the bottom of the Stage, speaking in dumb Show, which they cross, disappearing behind the Trees, and are presently followed by* CATHRINA *and* ALICE, *who continue walking there:* OR. THEO. *and* HART. *then appear again, entering near the front of the Stage.*

OR. (*talking to* Hart. *as she enters*)

AND so, since fate has made me, woe the day!
That poor and good-for-nothing, helpless being,
Woman yclept, I must consign myself
With all my lands and rights into the hands
Of some proud man, and say, "Take all, I pray,
And do me in return the grace and favour
To be my master."

Hart. Nay, gentle lady! you constrain my words
And load them with a meaning harsh and foreign
To what they truly bear.—A master! No:
A valiant gentle mate, who in the field
Or in the council will maintain your right:
A noble, equal partner.

Or. (*shaking her head*) Well I know
In such a partnership, the share of power

Allotted to the wife. See; noble Falkenſtein
Hath ſilent been the while, nor ſpoke one word
In aid of all your ſpecious arguments.
What's your advice, my Lord? (*to* Theo.)
Theo. Ah, noble Orra!
'Twere like ſelf-murder to give honeſt counſel,
Then urge me not. — I frankly do confeſs
I ſhould be more heroic than I am.
Or. Right well I ſee thy head approves my plan,
And by and by, ſo will thy gen'rous heart.
In ſhort, I would, without another's leave,
Improve the low condition of my peaſants,
And cheriſh them in peace. Ev'n now methinks
Each little cottage of my native vale
Swells out its earthen ſides, up-heaves its roof,
Like to a hillock mov'd by lab'ring mole,
And with green trail-weeds clamb'ring up its walls,
Roſes and ev'ry gay and fragrant plant,
Before my fancy ſtands, a fairy bower.
Aye, and within it too do fairies dwell.
(*Looking playfully thro' her fingers like a ſhew-glaſs*)
Peep thro' its wreathed window, if indeed
The flowers grow not too cloſe; and there within
Thou'lt ſee ſome half a dozen roſy brats,
Eating from wooden bowls their dainty milk; —
Thoſe are my mountain elves. See'ſt thou not
Their very forms diſtinctly?

Theo. O moſt diſtinctly! And moſt beautiful
The ſight! Which ſweetly ſtirreth in the heart
Feelings that gladden and ennoble it,
Dancing like ſun-beams on the rippled ſea:
A bleſſed picture! Foul befall the man,
Whoſe narrow ſelfiſh ſoul would ſhade or mar it!

Hart. To this right heartily I ſay Amen!
But if there be a man, whoſe gen'rous ſoul
(*turning to* Orra)
Like ardour fills; who would with thee purſue
Thy gen'rous plan; who would his harneſs don—

Or. (*putting her hand on him, in gentle interruption*)
Nay, valiant Banneret, who would, an' pleaſe you,
His harneſs doff: all feuds, all ſtrife forbear,
All military rivalſhip, all luſt
Of added power, and live in ſteady quietneſs
A mild and foſt'ring Lord. Know you of one
That would ſo ſhare my taſk? — You anſwer not.
And your brave friend methinks caſts on the ground
A thoughtful look; wots he of ſuch a Lord?
(*to* Theo.)

Theo. Wot I of ſuch a Lord! — No, noble Orra,
I do not, nor does Hartman, tho' perhaps
His friendſhip may betray his judgment. No;
None ſuch exiſt; we are all fierce, contentious,
Reſtleſs and proud, and prone to vengeful feuds;
The very diſtant ſound of war excites us,

Like courſers liſt'ning to the chaſe, who paw
And fret and bite the curbing rein. Truſt none
To croſs thy gentle, but moſt princely purpoſe,
Who hath on head a circling helmet wore,
Or ever graſp'd a glave. — But ne'ertheleſs
There is — I know a man. — Might I be bold?

Or. Being ſo honeſt, boldneſs is your right.

Theo. Permitted then, I'll ſay, I know a man,
Tho' moſt unworthy Orra's Lord to be,
Who, as her champion, friend, devoted ſoldier,
Might yet commend himſelf; and, ſo received,
Who would at her command, for her defence
His ſword right proudly draw. An honour'd ſword,
Like that which at the gate of Paradiſe
From ſteps prophane the bleſſed region guarded.

Or. Thanks to the gen'rous knight! I alſo know
The man thou would'ſt commend; and when my ſtate
Such ſervice needeth, to no ſword but his
Will I that ſervice owe.

Theo. Moſt noble Orra! greatly is he honour'd;
And will not murmur that a higher wiſh,
Too high, and too preſumptuous, is repreſt.
(*Kiſſing her hand with great reſpect*)

Or. Nay, Rodolph Hartman, clear that cloudy brow,
And look on Falkenſtein and on myſelf,
As two co-burghers of thy native city,
(For ſuch I mean ere long to be,) and claiming

From thee, as cadets from an elder born,
Thy chearing equal kindneſs.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. The Count is now at leiſure to receive
The Lord of Falkenſtein, and Rodolph Hartman.

Hart. We ſhall attend him ſhortly.

(*Exit* Servant.)

(*Aſide to* Theo.) — Muſt we now
Our purpos'd ſuit, to ſome pretended matter
Of lighter import change?

Theo. (*to* Hart. *aſide*) Aſſuredly.—
Madam, I take my leave with all devotion.

Hart. I with all friendly wiſhes.

[EXEUNT Theo. and Hart.

(CATHRINA *and* ALICE *now advance through the ſhrubs, &c. at the bottom of the ſtage, while* ORRA *remains, wrapped in thought, on the front.*)

Cath. Madam, you're thoughtful; ſomething occupies
Your buſy mind.

Or. What was't we talk'd of, when the worthy Banneret
With Falkenſtein upon our converſe broke?

Cath. How we ſhould ſpend our time, when in your caſtle
You ſhall your ſtate maintain in ancient ſplendour,
With all your vaſſals round you.

Or. Aye, ſo it was.

Al. And you did ſay, my Lady,

It ſhould not be a cold unſocial grandeur:
That you would keep, the while, a merry houſe.
Or. O doubt it not! I'll gather round my board
All that heav'n ſends to me of way-worn folks,
And noble travellers, and neighb'ring friends,
Both young and old. Within my ample hall,
The worn-out man of arms, (of whom too many,
Nobly deſcended, rove like reckleſs vagrants
From one proud chieftain's caſtle to another,
Half chid, half honour'd,) ſhall o'tip-toe tread,
Toſſing his grey locks from his wrinkled brow
With cheerful freedom, as he boaſts his feats
Of days gone by. — Muſic we'll have; and oft
The bick'ring dance upon our oaken floors
Shall, thund'ring loud, ſtrike on the diſtant ear
Of 'nighted trav'llers, who ſhall gladly bend
Their doubtful footſteps tow'rds the cheering din.
Solemn, and grave, and cloiſter'd, and demure
We ſhall not be. Will this content ye, damſels?
Al. O paſſing well! 'twill be a pleaſant life;
Free from all ſtern ſubjection; blithe and fanciful;
We'll do whate'er we liſt.
Cath. That right and prudent is, I hope thou meaneſt.
Al. Why ever ſo ſuſpicious and ſo ſtrict?
How could'ſt thou think I had another meaning?
(*To* Orra) And ſhall we ramble in the woods full oft
With hound and horn? — that is my deareſt joy.

Or. Thou runn'ſt me faſt, good Alice. Do not doubt
This ſhall be wanting to us. Ev'ry ſeaſon
Shall have its ſuited paſtime: even Winter
In its deep noon, when mountains piled with ſnow,
And chok'd up valleys from our manſion bar
All entrance, and nor gueſt nor traveller
Sounds at our gate; the empty hall forſaking,
In ſome warm chamber, by the crackling fire,
We'll hold our little, ſnug, domeſtic court,
Plying our work with ſong and tale between.

Cath. And ſtories too, I ween, of ghoſts and ſpirits,
And things unearthly, that on Michael's eve
Riſe from the yawning tombs.

Or. Thou thinkeſt then one night o' th' year is truly
More horrid than the reſt.

Cath. Perhaps 'tis only ſilly ſuperſtition:
But yet it is well known the Count's brave father
Would rather on a glacier's point have lain,
By angry tempeſts rock'd, than on that night
Sunk in a downy couch in Brunier's caſtle.

Or. How pray? What fearful thing did ſcare him ſo?

Cath. Haſt thou ne'er heard the ſtory of Count Hugo,
His anceſtor, who ſlew the hunter-knight?

Or. (*eagerly*) Tell it I pray thee.

Al. Cathrina, tell it not: it is not right:

Such ſtories ever change her cheerful ſpirits
To gloomy penſiveneſs; her roſy bloom
To the wan colour of a ſhrouded corſe.
(*To* Orra) What pleaſure is there, Lady, when thy hand,
Cold as the valley's ice, with haſty graſp
Seizes on her who ſpeaks, while thy ſhrunk form
Cow'ring and ſhiv'ring ſtands with keen turn'd ear
To catch what follows of the pauſing tale?
Or. And let me cow'ring ſtand, and be my touch
The valley's ice: there is a pleaſure in it.
Al. Say'ſt thou indeed there is a pleaſure in it?
Or. Yea, when the cold blood ſhoots through every vein:
When every hair's-pit on my ſhrunken ſkin
A knotted knoll becomes, and to mine ears
Strange inward ſounds awake, and to mine eyes
Ruſh ſtranger tears, there is a joy in fear.
(*Catching hold of Cathrina*)
Tell it, Cathrina, for the life within me
Beats thick, and ſtirs to hear it.
He ſlew the hunter-knight?
Cath. Since I muſt tell it, then, the ſtory goes
That grim Count Wallenberg, the anceſtor
Of Hughobert and alſo of yourſelf,
From hatred or from envy, did decoy
A noble knight, who hunted in the foreſt,
Well the Black Foreſt named, into his caſtle,
And there, within his chamber, murder'd him—

Or. Merciful Heaven! and in my veins there runs
A murderer's blood. Said'ſt thou not, *murder'd him?*

Cath. Aye; as he lay aſleep, at dead of night.

Or. A deed moſt horrible!

Cath. It was on Michael's eve; and ſince that time,
The neighb'ring hinds oft hear the midnight yell
Of ſpectre-hounds, and ſee the ſpectre ſhapes
Of huntſmen on their ſable ſteeds, with ſtill
A nobler hunter riding in their van
To cheer the deſp'rate chace, by moonlight ſhewn,
When wanes its horn, in long October nights.

Or. This hath been often ſeen?

Cath. Aye, ſo they ſay.
But, as the ſtory goes, on Michael's eve,
And on that night alone of all the year,
The hunter-knight himſelf, having a horn
Thrice ſounded at the gates, the caſtle enters;
And, in the very chamber where he died,
Calls on his murd'rer, or in his default
Some true deſcendant of his houſe, to looſe
His ſpirit from its torment; for his body
Is laid i'the earth unbleſs'd, and none can tell
The ſpot of its interment.

Or. Call on ſome true deſcendant of his race!
It were to ſuch a fearful interview.
But in that chamber, on that night alone ——

Hath he elſewhere to any of the race
Appear'd? or hath he power———
Al. Nay, nay, forbear:
See how ſhe looks. (*To* Orra) I fear thou art not well.
Or. There is a ſickly faintneſs come upon me.
Al. And did'ſt thou ſay there is a joy in fear?
Or. My mind of late has ſtrange impreſſions ta'en.
I know not how it is.
Al. A few nights ſince,
Stealing o'tiptoe, ſoftly thro' your chamber,
Towards my own———
Or. O heaven defend us! did'ſt thou ſee aught there?
Al. Only your ſleeping ſelf. But you appear'd
Diſtreſs'd and troubled in your dreams; and once
I thought to wake you ere I left the chamber,
But I forbore.
Or. And glad I am thou did'ſt.
It is not dreams I fear; for ſtill with me
There is an indiſtinctneſs o'er them caſt,
Like the dull gloom of miſty twilight, where
Before mine eyes paſs all incongruous things,
Huge, horrible and ſtrange, on which I ſtare
As idiots do upon this changeful world
With nor ſurpriſe nor ſpeculation. No;
Dreams I fear not: it is the dreadful waking,
When in deep midnight ſtillneſs, the rouſed fancy
Takes up th' imperfect ſhadows of its ſleep,

Like a marr'd ſpeech ſnatch'd from a bungler's mouth,
Shaping their forms diſtinctively and vivid
To viſions horrible: — this is my bane; —
It is the dreadful waking that I fear.

Al. Well, ſpeak of other things. There in good time
Your ghoſtly father comes with quicken'd ſteps,
Like one who bears ſome tidings good or ill.
Heaven grant they may be good!

Enter URSTON.

Or. Father, you ſeem diſturb'd.

Ur. Daughter I am in truth diſturb'd. The Count
Has o'the ſudden, being much enraged
That Falkenſtein ſtill lingers near theſe walls,
Reſolv'd to ſend thee hence, to be a while
In baniſhment detained, till on his ſon
Thou look'ſt with better favour.

Or. Aye indeed!
That is to ſay perpetual baniſhment:
A ſentence light or heavy, as the place
Is ſweet or irkſome he would ſend me to.

Ur. He will contrive to make it, doubt him not,
Irkſome enough. Therefore I would adviſe thee
To feign at leaſt, but for a little time,
A diſpoſition to obey his wiſhes.
He's ſtern, but not relentleſs; and his dame,
The gentle Eleanor, will ſtill befriend you,
When fit occaſion ſerves.

Or. What ſaid'ſt thou, Father?
To feign a diſpoſition to obey!
I did miſtake thy words.
Urſt. No, gentle daughter;
So preſs'd, thou mayeſt feign and yet be blameleſs.
A truſty guardian's faith with thee he holds not,
And therefore thou art free to meet his wrongs
With what defence thou haſt.
Or. (*proudly*) Nay pardon me; I, with an unſhorn crown,
Muſt hold the truth in plain ſimplicity,
And am in nice diſtinctions moſt unſkilful.
Urſt. Lady, have I deſerv'd this ſharpneſs? oft
Thine infant hand has ſtrok'd this ſhaven crown:
Thou'ſt ne'er till now reproach'd it.
Or. (*burſting into tears*)
Pardon, O pardon me, my gentle Urſton!
Pardon a wayward child, whoſe eager temper
Doth ſometimes mar the kindneſs of her heart.
Father, am I forgiven? (*Hanging on him.*)
Urſt. Thou art, thou art:
Thou art forgiven; more than forgiven, my child.
Or. Then lead me to the Count, I will myſelf
Learn his ſtern purpoſe.
Ur. In the hall he is,
Seated in ſtate, and waiting to receive you.
[EXEUNT.

SCENE III.

A ſpacious Apartment, or Baron's Hall, with a Chair of State, HUGHOBERT, ELEANORA, *and* GLOTTENBAL *enter near the Front, ſpeaking as they enter; and afterwards enter Vaſſals and Attendants, who range themſelves at the bottom of the Stage.*

Hugh. Ceaſe, Dame! I will not hear; thou ſtriv'ſt in vain
With thy weak pleadings. Orra hence muſt go
Within the hour, unleſs ſhe will engage
Her plighted word to marry Glottenbal.

Glot. Aye, and a mighty hardſhip, by the maſs!

Hugh. I've ſummon'd her in ſolemn form before me,
That theſe my vaſſals ſhould my act approve,
Knowing my right of guardianſhip; and alſo
That her late father, in his dying moments,
Did will ſhe ſhould be married to my ſon;
Which will, ſhe now muſt promiſe to obey,
Or take the conſequence.

El. But why ſo haſty?

Hugh. Why, ſay'ſt thou! Falkenſtein ſtill in theſe parts
Lingers with ſly intent. Even now he left me,
After an interview of ſmall importance,
Which he and Hartman, as a blind pretence
For ſeeing Orra, formally requeſted.
I ſay again ſhe muſt forthwith obey me,
Or take the conſequence of wayward will.

El. Nay, not for Orra do I now entreat
So much as for thyſelf. Bethink thee well
What honour thou ſhalt have, when it is known
Thy ward from thy protecting roof was ſent;
Thou who ſhould'ſt be to her a friend, a father.

Hugh. But do I ſend her unprotected? No!
Brave Rudigere conducts her with a band
Of truſty ſpearmen. In her new abode
She will be ſafe as here.

El. Ha! Rudigere!
Put'ſt thou ſuch truſt in him? Alas, my Lord!
His heart is full of cunning and deceit.
Wilt thou to him the flower of all thy race
Raſhly intruſt? O be adviſed my Lord!

Hugh. Thy ghoſtly father tells thee ſo, I doubt not.
Another prieſt confeſſes Rudigere,
And Urſton likes him not. But can'ſt thou think,
With aught but honeſt purpoſe, he would chuſe
From all her women the ſevere Cathrina,
So ſtrictly virtuous, for her companion?
This puts all doubt to ſilence. Say no more,
Elſe I ſhall think thou plead'ſt againſt my ſon,
More with a ſtep-dame's than a mother's feelings.

Glot. Aye, marry does ſhe father! And forſooth!
Regards me as a fool. No marvel then
That Orra ſcorns me; being taught by her,—
How ſhould ſhe elſe? — So to conſider me.

Hugh. (*to* Glottenbal) Tut! hold thy tongue.

El. He wrongs me much, my Lord.

Hugh. No more, for here ſhe comes.

(*Enter* ORRA, *attended by* URSTON, ALICE *and* CATHRINA, *and* HUGHOBERT *ſeats himſelf in his chair of ſtate, the Vaſſals, &c. ranging themſelves on each ſide.*)

Hugh. (*to* Orra) Madam and ward, placed under mine authority,
And to my charge committed by my kinſman,
Ulric of Aldenberg, thy noble father;
Having all gentle means eſſay'd to win thee
To the fulfilment of his dying will,
That did decree his heireſs ſhould be married
With Glottenbal my heir; I ſolemnly
Now call upon thee, ere that rougher means
Be uſed for this good end, to promiſe truly,
Thou wilt, within a ſhort and ſtated time,
Before the altar give thy plighted faith
To this my only ſon. I wait thine anſwer.
Orra of Aldenberg, wilt thou do this?

Or. Count of the ſame, my lord and guardian,
I will not.

Hugh. Have a care thou froward maid!
'Tis thy laſt opportunity: ere long
Thou ſhalt, within a dreary dwelling pent,
Count thy dull hours, told by the dead man's watch,
And wiſh thou had'ſt not been ſo proudly wilful.

Or. And let my dull hours by the dead man's watch
Be told; yea, make me too the dead man's mate,

My dwelling place the nailed coffin; ſtill
I would prefer it to the living Lord
Your goodneſs offers me.
Hugh. Art thou bewitch'd?
Is he not young, well featured and well form'd?
And doſt thou put him in thy eſtimation
With bones and ſheeted clay?
Beyond endurance is thy ſtubborn ſpirit.
Right well thy father knew that all thy ſex
Stubborn and headſtrong are; therefore, in wiſdom,
He veſted me with power that might compel thee
To what he will'd ſhould be.
Or. O not in wiſdom!
Say rather in that weak, but gen'rous faith,
Which ſaid to him, the cope of heaven would fall
And ſmother in its cradle his ſwath'd babe,
Rather than thou, his mate in arms, his kinſman,
Who by his ſide in many a field had fought,
Should'ſt take advantage of his confidence
For fordid ends. —
My brave and noble father!
A voice comes from thy grave and cries againſt it,
And bids me to be bold. Thine awful form
Riſes before me, — and that look of anguiſh
On thy dark brow! — O no! I blame thee not.
Hugh. Thou ſeem'ſt beſide thyſelf with ſuch wild geſtures

And ſtrangely-flaſhing eyes. Repreſs theſe fancies,
And to plain reaſon liſten. Thou haſt ſaid,
For ſordid ends I have advantage ta'en.
Since thy brave father's death, by war and compact,
Thou of thy lands haſt loſt a third; whilſt I,
By happy fortune, in my heir's behalf,
Have doubled my domains to what they were
When Ulric choſe him as a match for thee.

Or. O, and what ſpeaketh this, but that my father
Domains regarded not; and thought a man,
Such as the ſon ſhould be of ſuch a man
As thou to him appear'dſt, a match more honourable
Than one of ampler ſtate. Take thou from Glottenbal
The largely added lands of which thou boaſteſt,
And put, in lieu thereof, into his ſtores
Some weight of manly ſenſe and gen'rous worth,
And I will ſay thou keep'ſt faith with thy friend:
But as it is, did'ſt thou unto thy wealth
A kingdom add, thou poorly would'ſt deceive him.

Hugh. (*riſing from his chair in anger*)
Now Madam, be all counſel on this matter
Between us cloſed. Prepare thee for thy journey.

El. Nay, good my Lord! conſider.

Hugh. (*to* Eleanora) What, again!

Have I not ſaid thou haſt an alien's heart
From me and mine. Learn to reſpect my will
In ſilence, as becomes a youthful Dame.
Urſt. For a few days may ſhe not ſtill remain?
Hugh. No, prieſt; not for an hour. It is my pleaſure
That ſhe for Brunier's caſtle do ſet forth
Without delay.
Or. (*with a faint ſtarting movement*) In Brunier's caſtle!
Hug. Aye;
And doth this change the colour of thy cheek,
And give thy alter'd voice a feebler ſound?
(*Aſide to* Glottenbal)
She ſhrinks, now to her, boy; this is thy time.
Glot. (*to* Orra) Unleſs thou wilt, thou need'ſt not go at all.
There is full many a maiden would right gladly
Accept the terms we offer, and remain.
(*A pauſe*) Wilt thou not anſwer me?
Or. I did not hear thee ſpeak. — I heard thy voice,
But not thy words: What ſaid'ſt thou?
Glot. I ſay there's many a maiden would right gladly
Accept the terms we offer, and remain.
The daughter of a King hath match'd ere now
With mine inferior. We are link'd together
As 'twere by right and natural property.
And as I've ſaid before I ſay again,
I love thee too: What more could'ſt thou deſire?

Or. I thank thee for thy courtſhip, tho' uncouth;
For it confirms my purpoſe; and my ſtrength
Grows as thou ſpeak'ſt, firm like the deep-bas'd rock.
(*To* Hughobert) Now for my journey when you will, my Lord;
I'm ready.
Hugh. Be it ſo! on thine own head
Reſt all the blame.
(*Going from her*)
Perverſe paſt all belief!
(*Turning round to her ſiernly*)
Orra of Aldenberg, wilt thou obey me?
Or. Count of that noble houſe, with all reſpect,
Again I ſay I will not.
(Exit Hughobert *in anger, followed by* Glottenbal, Urſton, *&c. Manent only* Eleanora, Cathrina, Alice *and* Orra, *who keeps up with ſtately pride till* Hughobert *and all Attendants are gone out, and then throwing herſelf into the arms of* Eleanora, *gives vent to her feelings.*)
El. Sweet Orra! be not ſo depreſs'd; thou goeſt
For a ſhort term, ſoon to return again;
The baniſhment is mine who ſtays behind.
But I will beg of heaven with ceaſeleſs prayers
To have thee ſoon reſtored: and, when I dare,
Will plead with Hughbobert in thy behalf;
He is not always ſtern.

Or. Thanks, gentle friend! Thy voice to me doth ſound
Like the laſt ſounds of kindly nature; dearly
In my remembrance ſhall they reſt. — What ſounds,
What ſights, what horrid intercourſe I may,
Ere we ſhall meet again, be doom'd to prove,
High heaven alone doth know. — If that indeed
We e'er ſhall meet again!

(*Falls on her neck and weeps.*)

El. Nay, nay! come to my chamber. There awhile
Compoſe your ſpirits. Be not ſo depreſt.

[EXEUNT.

(Rudigere, *who has appear'd, during the laſt part of the above ſcene, at the bottom of the ſtage, half concealed, as if upon the watch, now comes forward.*)

(*Speaking as he advances*)

Hold firm her pride till fairly from theſe walls
Our journey is begun; then fortune hail!
Thy favours are ſecured.

(*Looking off the ſtage*)

Ho, Maurice there!

Enter MAURICE.

My faithful Maurice, I would ſpeak with thee.
I leave thee here behind me; to thy care,
My int'reſts I commit; be it thy charge
To counteract thy Lady's influence,
Who will entreat her Lord the term to ſhorten

Of Orra's abſence, maiming thus my plan,
Which muſt, belike, have time to be effected.
Be vigilant, be artful; and be ſure
Thy ſervices I amply will repay.

Maur. Aye, thou haſt ſaid ſo, and I have believed thee.

Rud. And doſt thou doubt?

Maur. No; yet meantime, good ſooth!
If ſomewhat of thy bounty I might finger,
'Twere well: I like to have ſome actual proof.
Did'ſt thou not promiſe it?

Rud. 'Tis true I did,
But other preſſing calls have drain'd my means.

Maur. And other preſſing calls within my mind,
May make my faith to falter.

Rud. Go to! I know thou art a greedy leech,
Tho' ne'ertheleſs thou lov'ſt me.
(*Taking a ſmall caſe from his pocket, which he opens*)
See'ſt thou here?
I have no coin; but look upon theſe jewels:
I took them from a knight I ſlew in battle.
When I am Orra's lord, thou ſhalt receive,
Were it ten thouſand crowns, whate'er their worth
Shall by a ſkilful lapidary be
In honeſty eſteem'd.
(*Gives him the jewels.*)

Maur. I thank thee, but methinks their luſtre's dim.
I've ſeen the ſtones before upon thy breaſt

In gala days, but never heard thee boaſt
They were of ſo much value.

Rud. I was too prudent: I had loſt them elſe.
To no one but thyſelf would I entruſt
The ſecret of their value.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir Rudigere, the ſpearmen are without,
Waiting your further orders, for the journey.

Rud. (*to* Servant) I'll come to them anon.
[EXIT Servant.
Before I go, I'll ſpeak to thee again.
[EXEUNT *ſeverally.*

ACT III.

SCENE. I. — *A Foreſt with a half-ruined Caſtle in the Back-Ground, ſeen through the Trees by Moon-light.* FRANKO *and ſeveral* Outlaws *are diſcovered ſitting on the Ground, round a Fire, with Flaggons, &c. by them, as if they had been drinking.*

Song of ſeveral voices.

THE cough and crow to rooſt are gone,
The owl ſits on the tree,
The huſh'd wind wails with feeble moan,
Like infant charity.
The wild-fire dances on the fen,
The red ſtar ſheds its ray,
Up-rouſe ye, then, my merry men!
It is our op'ning day.

Both child and nurſe are faſt aſleep,
And clos'd is every flower,
And winking tapers faintly peep
High from my Lady's bower;
Bewilder'd hinds with ſhorten'd ken
Shrink on their murky way,
Up-rouſe ye, then, my merry men!
It is our op'ning day.

Nor board nor garner own we now,
Nor roof nor latched door,
Nor kind mate, bound by holy vow
To bleſs a good man's ſtore;

Noon lulls us in a gloomy den,
And night is grown our day,
Up-rouſe ye, then, my merry men!
And uſe it as ye may.

Frank. (*to* 1*ſt* Out.) How lik'ſt thou this, Fernando?

1*ſt Out.* Well ſung i'faith! but ſerving ill our turn,
Who would all trav'llers and benighted folks
Scare from our precincts. Such ſweet harmony
Will rather tempt invaſion.

Frank. Fear not, for mingled voices, heard afar,
Thro' glade and glen and thicket, ſtealing on
To diſtant liſt'ners, ſeem wild-goblin-ſounds;
At which the lonely trav'ller checks his ſteed,
Pauſing with long-drawn breath and keen-turn'd ear;
And twilight pilferers caſt down in haſte
Their ill-got burthens, while the homeward hind
Turns from his path, full many a mile about,
Thro' bog and mire to grope his blund'ring way.
Such, to the ſtartled ear of ſuperſtition,
Were ſeraph's ſong, could we like ſeraphs ſing.

(*Enter* 1*ſt* Outlaw *haſtily.*)

2*d Out.* Diſperſe ye diff'rent ways: we are undone.

Frank. How ſay'ſt thou, ſhrinking poltron? we undone!
Outlaw'd and ruin'd men, who live by daring!

2d Out. A train of armed men, ſome noble Dame
Eſcorting, (ſo their ſcatter'd words diſcover'd
As unperceived I hung upon their rear,)
Are cloſe at hand, and mean to paſs the night
Within the caſtle.

Frank. Some benighted travellers,
Bold from their numbers, or who ne'er have heard
The ghoſtly legend of this dreaded place.

1ſt Out. Let us keep cloſe within our vaulted haunts;
The way to which is tangled and perplex'd,
And cannot be diſcover'd: with the morn
They will depart.

Frank. Nay, by the holy maſs! within thoſe walls
Not for a night muſt trav'llers quietly reſt,
Or few or many. Would we live ſecurely,
We muſt uphold the terrors of the place:
Therefore, let us prepare our midnight rouſe.
See, from the windows of the caſtle gleam
(*lights ſeen from the caſtle*)
Quick paſſing lights, as tho' they moved within
In hurried preparation; and that bell,
(*bell heard*)
Which from yon turret its ſhrill 'larum ſends,
Betokens ſome unwonted ſtir. Come hearts!
Be all prepared, before the midnight watch,
The fiend-like din of our infernal chace
Around the walls to raiſe. — Come; night advances.

[Exeunt.

SCENE II.

A Gothic Room in the Caſtle, with the Stage darkened; enter CATHRINA, *bearing a Light, followed by* ORRA.

Or. (*Catching her by the robe and pulling her back*)
Advance no further: turn I pray! This room
More diſmal and more ghaſtly ſeems than that
Which we have left behind. Thy taper's light,
As thus aloft thou wav'ſt it to and fro,
The fretted cieling gilds with feeble brightneſs,
Whilſt over-head its carved ribs glid paſt
Like edgy waves of a dark ſea, returning
To an eclipſed moon its ſullen ſheen.

Cath. To me it ſeems leſs diſmal than the other.
See, here are chairs around the table ſet,
As if its laſt inhabitants had left it
Scarcely an hour ago.
(*Setting the light upon the table*)

Or. Alas! how many hours and years have paſt
Since human forms have round this table ſat,
Or lamp or taper on its ſurface gleam'd!
Methinks I hear the ſound of time long paſt
Still murm'ring o'er us in the lofty void
Of thoſe dark arches, like the ling'ring voices
Of thoſe who long within their graves have ſlept.
It was their gloomy home; now it is mine.
(*Sits down, reſting her arm upon the table and covering her eyes with her hand.*)

(*Enter* RUDIGERE, *beckoning* CATHRINA *to come to him; and ſpeaks to her in a low voice at the corner of the ſtage*)

Go and prepare thy Lady's chamber; why
Doſt thou for ever cloſely near her keep?

Cath. She charged me ſo to do:

Rud. I charge thee alſo,
With paramount authority, to leave her:
I for a while will take thy ſtation here.
Thou art not mad? Thou doſt not heſitate?
(*Fixing his eyes on her with a fierce threatening look, from which ſhe ſhrinks.*)

[EXIT Cath.

Or. This was the home of bloody lawleſs power:
The very air reſts thick and heavily
Where murder hath been done.
(*Sighing heavily*) There is a ſtrange oppreſſion in my breaſt:
Doſt thou not feel a cloſe unwholeſome vapour?

Rud. No; ev'ry air to me is light and healthful,
That with thy ſweet and heavenly breath is mix'd.

Or. (*ſtarting up*) Thou here!
(*Looking round*) Cathrina gone?

Rud. Does Orra fear to be alone with one,
Whoſe weal, whoſe being on her favour hangs?

Or. Retire, Sir Knight. I chuſe to be alone.

Rud. And doſt thou chuſe it, wearing now ſo near
The midnight hour, in ſuch a place? — Alas!
How loath'd and irkſome muſt my preſence be!

Or. Doſt thou deride my weakneſs?
Rud. I deride it!
No, noble Maid! ſay rather that from thee
I have a kindred weakneſs caught. In battle
My courage never ſhrunk, as my arm'd heel
And creſted helm do fairly teſtify:
But now when midnight comes, I feel by ſympathy,
With thinking upon thee, fears riſe within me
I never knew before.
Or. (*in a ſoftened kindlier voice*)
Ha! doſt thou too
Such human weakneſs own?
Rud. I plainly feel
We are all creatures, in the wakeful hour
Of ghaſtly midnight, form'd to cower together,
Forgetting all diſtinctions of the day,
Beneath its awful and myſterious power.
(*Stealing cloſer to her as he ſpeaks, and putting his arms round her.*)
Or. (*breaking from him*)
I pray thee hold thy parley further off:
Why doſt thou preſs ſo near me?
Rud. And art thou ſo offended, lovely Orra?
Ah! wherefore am I thus preſumptuous deem'd?
The blood that fills thy veins enriches mine;
From the ſame ſtock we ſpring; tho' by that glance
Of thy diſdainful eye, too well I ſee
My birth erroneouſly thou counteſt baſe.
Or. Erroneouſly!
Rud. Yes, I will prove it ſo.

Longer I'll not endure a galling wrong
Which makes each word of tenderneſs that burſts
From a full heart, bold and preſumptuous ſeem,
And ſevers us ſo far.

Or. No, ſubtile ſnake!
It is the baſeneſs of thy ſelfiſh mind,
Full of all guile, and cunning, and deceit,
That ſevers us ſo far, and ſhall do ever.

Rud. Thou prov'ſt how far my paſſion will endure
Unjuſt reproaches from a mouth ſo dear.

Or. Out on hypocriſy! who but thyſelf
Did Hughobert adviſe to ſend me hither?
And who the jailor's hateful office holds
To make my thraldom ſure?

Rud. Upbraid me not for this: had I refuſed,
One leſs thy friend had ta'en th' ungracious taſk.
And, gentle Orra! doſt thou know a man,
Who might in ward all that his ſoul holds dear
From danger keep, yet would the charge refuſe,
For that ſtrict right ſuch wardſhip doth condemn?
O! ſtill to be with thee; to look upon thee;
To hear thy voice, makes ev'n this place of horrours,—
Where, as 'tis ſaid, the ſpectre of a chief,
Slain by our common grandſire, haunts the night,
A paradiſe — a place where I could live
In penury and gloom, and be moſt bleſs'd.
Ah! Orra! if there's miſery in thraldom,
Pity a wretch who breathes but in thy favour:

Who, till he look'd upon that beauteous face,
Was free and happy. — Pity me or kill me!
(*Kneeling and catching hold of her hand.*)
Or. Off, fiend! let ſnakes and vipers cling to me,
So thou doſt keep aloof.
Rud. (*riſing indignantly*)
And is my love with ſo much hatred met?
Madam, beware leſt ſcorn like this ſhould change me
Ev'n to the baleful thing your fears have fancied.
Or. Dar'ſt thou to threaten me?
Rud. He, who is mad with love and gall'd with ſcorn,
Dares any thing. — But O! forgive ſuch words
From one who rather, humbled at your feet,
Would of that gentleneſs, that gen'rous pity,
The native inmate of each female breaſt,
Receive the grace on which his life depends.
There was a time when thou did'ſt look on me
With other eyes.
Or. Thou doſt amaze me much.
Whilſt I believed thou wert an honeſt man,
Being no fool, and an adventurous ſoldier,
I look'd upon thee with good-will; if more
Thou did'ſt diſcover in my looks than this,
Thy wiſdom with thine honeſty, in truth
Was fairly match'd.
Rud. Madam, the proud deriſion of that ſmile
Deceives me not. It is the Lord of Falkenſtein,
Who, better ſkill'd than I in tournay-war,
Tho' not i' th' actual field more valiant found,

Engroſſes now your partial thoughts. And yet
What may he boaſt which, in a lover's ſuit,
I may not urge? He's brave, and ſo am I.
In birth I am his equal; for my mother,
As I ſhall prove, was married to Count Albert,
My noble father, tho' for reaſons tedious
Here to be ſtated, ſtill their ſecret nuptials
Were unacknowledged, and on me hath fallen
A cruel ſtigma which degrades my fortunes.
But were I — O forgive th' aſpiring thought! —
But were I Orra's Lord; I ſhould break forth
Like the unclouded ſun, by all acknowledged
As ranking with the higheſt in the land.

Or. Do what thou wilt when thou art Orra's Lord;
But being as thou art, retire and leave me:
I chuſe to be alone. (*Very proudly.*)

Rud. Then be it ſo.
Thy pleaſure, mighty Dame, I will not balk.
This night, to-morrow's night, and every night,
Shalt thou in ſolitude be left; if abſence
Of human beings can ſecure it for thee.

(*Pauſes and looks on her, while ſhe ſeems ſtruck and diſturb'd*)

It wears already on the midnight hour;
Good night!

(*Pauſes again, ſhe ſtill more diſturb'd.*)

Perhaps I underſtood too haſtily
Commands you may retract.

Or. (*recovering her ſtate*)
Leave me, I ſay; that part of my commands
I never can retract.

Rud. You are obeyed.

[EXIT.

(*Or. paces up and down haſtily for ſome time, then ſtops ſhort, and after remaining a little while in a thoughtful poſture.*)

Can ſpirit from the tomb, or fiend from hell,
More hateful, more malignant be than man —
Than villainous man? Altho' to look on ſuch,
Yea, even the very thought of looking on them,
Makes natural blood to curdle in the veins
And looſen'd limbs to ſhake.
There are who have endured the viſitation
Of ſupernatural Beings. — O forfend it!
I would cloſe couch me to my deadlieſt foe
Rather than for a moment bear alone
The horrours of the night.
Who's there? Who's there?
(*looking round*)
Heard I not voices near? That door ajar
Sends forth a cheerful light. Perhaps, Cathrina,
Who now prepares my chamber. Grant it be!

[EXIT, *running haſtily to a door from which a light is ſeen.*

SCENE III.

A Chamber, with a ſmall Bed or Couch in it; enter RUDIGERE *and* CATHRINA, *wrangling together.*

Rud. I ſay begone, and occupy the chamber
I have appointed thee: here I'm fix'd
To paſs the night.

Cath. Did'ſt thou not ſay my chamber
Should be adjoining that which Orra holds?
I know thy wicked thoughts: they meditate
Some dev'liſh ſcheme; but think not I'll abet it.

Rud. Thou wilt not! — angry, reſtive, ſimple fool!
Doſt thou ſtop ſhort and ſay "I'll go no further?"
Thou, whom concealed ſhame hath bound ſo faſt, —
My tool, — my inſtrument? — Fulfil thy charge
To the full bent of thy commiſſion, elſe
Thee, and thy bantling too, I'll from me caſt
To want and infamy.

Cath. O ſhameleſs man!
Thou art the ſon of a degraded mother
As low as I am, yet thou haſt no pity.

Rud. Aye, and doſt thou reproach my baſtardy
To make more baſe the man who conquer'd thee,
With all thy virtue, rigid and demure?
Who would have thought leſs than a ſov'reign Prince
Could e'er have compaſs'd ſuch achievement? Mean
As he may be, thou'ſt given thyſelf a maſter,
And muſt obey him. — Doſt thou yet reſiſt?
Thou know'ſt my meaning.

(*Tearing open his veſt in vehemence of action.*)

Cath. Under thy veſt a dagger! — Ah too well,
I know thy meaning, cruel, ruthleſs man!

Rud. Have I diſcover'd it? — I thought not of it:
The vehemence of geſture hath betray'd me.
I keep it not for thee, but for myſelf;
A refuge from diſgrace. Here is another:
He who with high but dangerous fortune grapples,
Should he be foil'd, looks but to friends like theſe.
(*Pulling out two daggers from his veſt.*)
This ſteel is ſtrong to give a vig'rous thruſt;
The other on its venom'd point hath that
Which, in the feebleſt hand, gives death as certain,
As tho' a giant ſmote the deſtin'd prey.

Cath. Thou deſp'rate man! ſo arm'd againſt thyſelf!

Rud. Aye; and againſt myſelf with ſuch reſolves,
Conſider well how I ſhall deal with thoſe
Who may withſtand my will or mar my purpoſe.
Think'ſt thou I'll feebly ——

Cath. O be pacified.
I will be gone: I am a humbled wretch
On whom thou trampleſt with a tyrant's cruelty.
[Exit.

Rud. looks after her with a malignant laugh, and then goes to the door of an adjoining chamber, to the lock of which he applies his ear.

All ſtill within. — I'm tired and heavy grown:
I'll lay me down to reſt. She is ſecure:
No one can paſs me here to gain her chamber.

If ſhe hold parley now with any thing,
It muſt in truth be ghoſt or ſprite. — Heigh ho!
I'm tired, and will to bed.

(*Lays himſelf on the couch and falls aſleep. The cry of hounds is then heard without at a diſtance, with the ſound of a horn; and preſently* Orra *enters, burſting from the door of the adjoining chamber, in great alarm.*)

Or. Cathrina! ſleepeſt thou? Awake! Awake!

(*Running up to the couch and ſtarting back on ſeeing* Rudigere)

That hateful viper here!
Is this my nightly guard? Deteſted wretch!
I will ſteal back again.

(*Walks ſoftly on tiptoe to the door of her chamber, when the cry of hounds, &c. is again heard without, nearer than before.*)

O no! I dare not.
Tho' ſleeping, and moſt hateful when awake,
Still he is natural life and may be 'waked.

(*liſtening again*)

'Tis nearer now: that diſmal thrilling blaſt!
I muſt awake him.

(*Approaching the couch and ſhrinking back again*)

O no! no no!
Upon his face he wears a horrid ſmile
That ſpeaks bad thoughts.

(Rud. *ſpeaks in his ſleep.*)

He mutters too my name. —

I dare not do it. (*Liſtening again*)
The dreadful ſound is now upon the wind,
Sullen and low, as if it wound its way
Into the cavern'd earth that ſwallow'd it.
I will abide in patient ſilence here ;
Tho' hateful and aſleep, I feel me ſtill
Near ſomething of my kind.

(*Croſſes her arms, and leans in a cowering poſture over the back of a chair at a diſtance from the couch ; when preſently the horn is heard without, louder than before, and ſhe ſtarts up.*)

O it returns ! as tho' the yawning earth
Had given it up again, near to the walls.
The horribly mingled din ! 'tis nearer ſtill :
'Tis cloſe at hand : 'tis at the very gate !
(*running up to the couch*)
Were he a murd'rer, clenching in his hands
The bloody knife, I muſt awake him. — No !
That face of dark and ſubtile wickedneſs !
I dare not do it. (*liſtiing again*) Aye ; 'tis at the gate —
Within the gate. —
What ruſhing blaſt is that
Shaking the doors ? Some awful viſitation
Dread entrance makes ! O mighty God of Heaven !
A ſound aſcends the ſtairs.
Ho, Rudigere !
Awake, awake ! Ho ! Wake thee, Rudigere !
Rud. (*waking*) What cry is that ſo terribly ſtrong ? — Ha Orra !
What is the matter ?

Or. It is within the walls. Did'ſt thou not hear it ?

Rud. What ? The loud voice that call'd me ?

Or. No, it was mine.

Rud. It ſounded in my ears
With more than human ſtrength.

Or. Did it ſo ſound ?
There is around us, in this midnight air,
A power ſurpaſſing nature. Liſt, I pray :
Altho' more diſtant now, doſt thou not hear
The yell of hounds ; the ſpectre-huntſman's horn ?

Rud. I hear, indeed, a ſtrangely mingled ſound:
The wind is howling round the battlements.
But reſt ſecure where ſafety is, ſweet Orra !
Within theſe arms, nor man nor fiend ſhall harm thee.

(*Approaching her with a ſoftened winning voice, while ſhe puſhes him off with abhorrence.*)

Or. Vile reptile ! touch me not.

Rud. Ah Orra ! thou art warp'd by prejudice,
And taught to think me baſe ; but in my veins
Lives noble blood, which I will juſtify.

Or. But in thy heart, falſe traitor ! what lives there ?

Rud. Alas ! thy angel-faultleſſneſs conceives not
The ſtrong temptations of a ſoul impaſſion'd
Beyond controul of reaſon. —— At thy feet —
(*kneeling*)
O ſpurn me not.

(*Enter ſeveral* Servants, *alarmed.*)

Rud. What all theſe fools upon us! Staring knaves,
What brings ye here at this untimely hour?

1ſt Serv. We have all heard it — 'twas the yell of hounds
And clatt'ring ſteeds, and the ſhrill horn between.

Rud. Out on ſuch folly!

2d Serv. In very truth it paſs'd cloſe to the walls;
Did not your Honour hear it?

Rud. Ha! ſay'ſt thou ſo? thou art not wont to join
In idle tales. — I'll to the battlements
And watch it there: it may return again.

[EXEUNT *ſeverally*, Rudigere *followed by* Servants, *and* Orra *into her own chamber.*

SCENE IV.

The Outlaws' *Cave; enter* THEOBALD.

Theo. (*looking round*) Here is a place in which ſome traces are
Of late inhabitants. In yonder nook
The embers faintly gleam, and on the walls
Hang ſpears and ancient arms: I muſt be right.
A figure thro' the gloom moves towards me.
Ho there! Whoe'er you are: Holla, good friend!

Enter an Outlaw.

Out. A ſtranger! Who art thou, who art thus bold,
To hail us here unbidden?

Theo. That thou ſhalt ſhortly know. Thou art, I gueſs,
One of the Outlaws, who this foreſt haunt.

Out. Be thy conjecture right or wrong, no more
Shalt thou return to tell where thou haſt found us.
Now for thy life!

(*drawing his ſword.*)

Theo. Hear me, I do entreat thee.

Out. Nay, nay! no fooliſh pleadings; for thy life
Is forfeit now; have at thee!

(*Falls fiercely upon* Theobald, *who alſo draws and defends himſelf bravely, when another* Outlaw *enters and falls likewiſe upon him.* Theo. *then recedes, fighting, till he gets his back to the wall of the cavern, and there defends himſelf ſtoutly.*)

Enter Franko.

Frank. Deſiſt, I charge you! Fighting with a ſtranger,
Two ſwords to one — a ſolitary ſtranger!

1ſt Out. We are diſcover'd: had he maſter'd me,
He had return'd to tell his mates above

What neighbours in these nether caves they have.
Let us dispatch him.

Frank. No, thou hateful butcher!
Dispatch a man alone and in our power!
Who art thou, stranger, who dost use thy sword
With no mean skill; and in this perilous case
So bold an air and countenance maintainest?
What brought thee hither?

Theo. My name is Theobald of Falkenstein;
To find the valiant Captain of these bands
And crave assistance of his gen'rous arm:
This is my business here.

Frank. (*struck and agitated, to his men*)
Go join your comrades in the further cave.

[Exeunt Outlaws.

And thou art Falkenstein? In truth thou art.
And who think'st thou am I?

Theo. Franko, the gen'rous leader of those Outlaws.

Frank. So am I call'd, and by that name alone
They know me. Sporting on the mountain's side,
Where Garva's wood waves green, in other days,
Some fifteen years ago, they called me Albert.

Theo. (*rushing into his arms*)
Albert; my play-mate Albert! Woe the day!
What cruel fortune drove thee to this state?

Frank. I'll tell thee all; but tell thou first to me
What is the aid thou camest here to ask.

Theo. Aye, thou wert ever thus: still forward bent

To ſerve, not to be ſerv'd.
But wave we this.
Laſt night a Lady to the caſtle came,
In thraldom by a villain kept, whom I
Would give my life to reſcue. Of arm'd force
Being at preſent deſtitute, I crave
Aſſiſtance of your counſel and your arms.

Frank. When did'ſt thou learn that Outlaws harbour here,
For 'tis but lately we have held theſe haunts?

Theo. Not till within the precincts of the foreſt,
Following the traces of that villain's courſe,
One of your band I met, and recogniz'd
As an old ſoldier, who, ſome few years back,
Had under my command right bravely ſerved.
Seeing himſelf diſcover'd, and encouraged
By what I told him of my ſtory, freely
He offer'd to conduct me to his captain.
But in a tangled path ſome ſpace before me,
Alarm'd at ſight of ſpearmen thro' the brake,
He ſtarted from his way, and ſo I miſſed him,
Making, to gain your cave, my way alone.

Frank. Thou'rt welcome here: and gladly I'll aſſiſt thee,
Tho' not by arms, the force within the caſtle
So far out-numb'ring mine. But other means
May ſerve thy purpoſe better.

Theo. What other means, I pray?

Frank. From theſe low caves, a paſſage underground
Leads to the caſtle — to the very tower

Where, as I gueſs, the Lady is confined;
When ſleep has ſtill'd the houſe, we'll make our way.

Theo. Aye, by my faith it is a noble plan!
Guarded or not we well may overcome
The few that may compoſe her midnight guard.

Frank. We ſhall not ſhrink from that.——
But by my fay!
To-morrow is St. Michael's Eve: 'twere well
To be the ſpectre-huntſman for a night,
And bear her off, without purſuit or hindrance.

Theo. I comprehend thee not.

Frank. Thou ſhalt ere long.
But ſtand not here; an inner room I have
Where thou ſhalt reſt and ſome refreſhment take,
And then we will more fully talk of this,
Which, ſlightly mention'd, ſeems chimerical.
Follow me.
(*Turning to him as they go out*)
Haſt thou ſtill upon thine arm
That mark which from mine arrow thou receiv'dſt
When ſportively we ſhot? The wound was deep,
And gall'd thee much, but thou mad'ſt light of it.

Theo. Yes, here it is. (*Pulling up his ſleeve as they go out, and* EXEUNT.)

ACT IV.

SCENE I.— *The Ramparts of the Caſtle. Enter* ORRA *and* CATHRINA.

Cath. (*after a pauſe in which* Orra *walks once or twice acroſs the ſtage, thoughtfully*)

GO in, I pray; thou wand'reſt here too long.
(*A pauſe again.*)
The air is cold; behind thoſe further mountains
The ſun is ſet. I pray thee now go in.

Or. Ha! ſets the ſun already? Is the day
Indeed drawn to its cloſe?

Cath. Yes, night approaches.
See, many a gather'd flock of cawing rooks
Are to their neſts returning.

Or. (*ſolemnly*) Night approaches!—
This awful night which living beings ſhrink from.
All now of every kind ſcour to their haunts,
While darkneſs, peopled with its hoſts unknown,
Awful dominion holds. Myſterious night!
What things unutterable thy dark hours
May lap!—What from thy teeming darkneſs burſt
Of horrid viſitations, ere that ſun
Again ſhall riſe on the enlighten'd earth!
(*A pauſe.*)

Cath. Why doſt thou gaze intently on the ſky?
See'ſt thou aught wonderful?

Or. Look there; behold that ſtrange gigantic form
Which yon grim cloud aſſumes; rearing aloft
The ſemblance of a warrior's plumed head,
While from its half-ſhaped arm a ſtreamy dart
Shoots angrily? Behind him too, far ſtretch'd,
Seems there not, verily, a ſeried line
Of fainter miſty forms?

Cath. I ſee, indeed,
A vaſty cloud, of many clouds compoſed,
Towering above the reſt; and that behind
In miſty faintneſs ſeen, which hath ſome likeneſs
To a long line of rocks with pine-wood crown'd:
Or, if indeed the fancy ſo incline,
A file of ſpearmen, ſeen thro' drifted ſmoke.

Or. Nay look how perfect now the form becomes:
Doſt thou not ſee?—Aye and more perfect ſtill.
O thou gigantic Lord, whoſe robed limbs
Beneath their ſtride ſpan half the heavens! art thou
Of lifeleſs vapour form'd? Art thou not rather
Some air-clad ſpirit—ſome portentous thing—
Some miſſion'd Being?—Such a ſky as this
Ne'er uſher'd in a night of nature's reſt.

Cath. Nay, many ſuch I've ſeen; regard it not.
That form, already changing, will ere long
Diſſolve to nothing. Tarry here no longer.
Go in I pray.

Or. No; while one gleam remains
Of the ſun's bleſſed light, I will not go.

Cath. Then let me fetch a cloak to keep thee warm,
For chilly blows the breeze.
Or. Do as thou wilt.
[Exit Cath.

Enter an Outlaw, *ſtealing ſoftly behind her.*

Out. (*in a low voice*) Lady! — the Lady Orra!
Or. (*ſtarting*) Merciful heaven! Sounds it beneath my feet
In earth or air?
(*He comes forward*)
Ha, a man!
Welcome is aught that wears a human face.
Did'ſt thou not hear a ſound?
Out. What ſound an' pleaſe you?
Or. A voice which call'd upon me now: it ſpoke
In a low hollow tone, ſuppreſs'd and low,
Unlike a human voice.
Out. It was my own.
Or. What would'ſt thou have?
Out. Here is a letter, Lady.
Or. Who ſent thee hither?
Out. It will tell thee all. (*Gives a letter*)
I muſt be gone, your chieftain is at hand.
[Exit.
Or. Comes it from Falkenſtein? It is his ſeal.
I may not read it here. I'll to my chamber.
[Exit *haſtily, not perceiving* Rudiger, *who enters by the oppoſite ſide, before ſhe has time to get off.*

Rud. A letter in her hand, and in ſuch haſte!
Some ſecret agent here from Falkenſtein?
It muſt be ſo.

(*Haſtening after her*, EXIT.)

SCENE II.

The Outlaws' *Cave; enter* THEOBALD *and* FRANKO *by oppoſite ſides.*

Theo. How now, good Captain; draws it near the time?
Are thoſe the keys?

Frank. They are; this doth unlock
The entrance to the ſtaircaſe, known alone
To Gomez, ancient keeper of the caſtle,
Who is my friend in ſecret, and deters
The neighb'ring peaſantry with dreadful tales
From viſiting by night our wide domains.
The other doth unlock a ſecret door,
That leads us to the chamber where ſhe ſleeps.

Theo. Thanks, gen'rous friend! thou art my better genius.
Did'ſt thou not ſay, until the midnight horn
Hath ſounded thrice, we muſt remain conceal'd?

Frank. Even ſo. And now I hear my men without
Telling the ſecond watch.

Theo. How looks the night?

Frank. As we could wiſh: the ſtars do faintly twinkle
Thro' ſever'd clouds, and ſhed but light ſufficient
To ſhew each nearer object cloſing on you

In dim unſhapely blackneſs. Aught that moves
Acroſs your path, or ſheep or ſtraggling goat,
Is now a pawing ſteed or grizzly bull,
Large and terrific; every air-mov'd buſh
Or jutting crag, ſome ſtrange gigantic thing.

Theo. Is all ſtill in the caſtle?

Frank. There is an owl fits hooting on the tower,
That anſwer from a diſtant mate receives,
Like the faint echo of his diſmal cry;
While a poor houſeleſs dog, by dreary fits,
Sits howling at the gate. All elſe is ſtill.

Theo. Each petty circumſtance is in our favour,
That makes the night more diſmal.

Frank. Aye, all goes well: as I approach'd the walls,
I heard two centinels — for now I ween,
The boldeſt ſpearman will not watch alone —
Together talk in the deep hollow voice
Of thoſe who ſpeak at midnight, under awe
Of the dead ſtillneſs round them.

Theo. Then let us put ourſelves in readineſs,
And heaven's good favour guide us!

[EXEUNT.

SCENE III.

A gloomy Apartment; enter ORRA *and* RUDIGERE.

Or. (*aſide*) The room is darken'd: yeſternight a lamp
Threw light around on roof and walls, and made
Its dreary ſpace leſs diſmal.

Rud. (*overhearing her, and calling to a* Servant *without*)
Ho! more lights here!
(Servant *enters with a light, and* EXIT.)
Thou art obey'd.
In aught,
But in the company of human kind,
Thou ſhalt be gratified. Thy lofty mind
For higher ſuper-human fellowſhip,
If ſuch there be, may now prepare it's ſtrength.
Or. Thou ruthleſs tyrant! They who have in battle
Fought valiantly, ſhrink like a helpleſs child
From any intercourſe with things unearthly.
Art thou a man? And bear'ſt thou in thy breaſt
The feelings of a man? It cannot be!
Rud. Yes, madam; in my breaſt I bear too keenly
The feelings of a man — a man moſt wretched:
A ſcorn'd, rejected man. — Make me leſs miſerable;
Nay rather ſhould I ſay, make me moſt bleſt;
And then —— (*attempting to take her hand while ſhe ſteps back from him, drawing herſelf up with an air ſtately and determined, and looking ſtedfaſtly in his face*)
Thou know'ſt my firm determination:
Give me thy ſolemn promiſe to be mine.
This is the price, thou haughty, ſcornful maid,
That will redeem thee from the hour of terrour!
This is the price ——

Or. Which never ſhall be paid.

(*Walks from him to the further end of the apartment.*)

Rud. (*after a pauſe*) Thou art determin'd then.
Be not ſo raſh:
Bethink thee well what fleſh and blood can bear:
The hour is near at hand.

(*She, turning round, waves him with her hand to leave her.*)

Thou deign'ſt no anſwer.
Well; reap the fruits of thine unconquer'd pride. [EXIT.

Manet ORRA.

Or. I am alone: That cloſing door divides me
From ev'ry being owning nature's life. —
And ſhall I be conſtrain'd to hold communion
With that which owns it not?

(*After pacing to and fro for a little while*)

O that my mind
Could raiſe its thoughts in ſtrong and ſteady fervour
To him, the Lord of all exiſting things,
Who lives and is where'er exiſtence is;
Graſping its hold upon his ſkirted robe,
Beneath whoſe mighty rule Angels and Spirits,
Demons and nether powers, all living things,
Hoſts of the earth, with the departed dead
In their dark ſtate of myſtery, alike
Subjected are! — And I will ſtrongly do it. —
Ah! Would I could! Some hidden powerful hindrance

Doth hold me back, and mars all thought. —
(*After a pauſe, in which ſhe ſtands fixed with her arms croſſed on her breaſt*)
Dread intercourſe!
O, if it look on me with its dead eyes!
If it ſhould move its lock'd and earthy lips
And utt'rance give to the grave's hollow ſounds!
If it ſtretch forth its cold and bony graſp ——
O horror, horror!
(*Sinking lower at every ſucceſſive idea, as ſhe repeats theſe four laſt lines, till ſhe is quite upon her knees on the ground.*)
O that beneath theſe planks of ſenſeleſs matter
I could, until the dreadful hour is paſt,
As ſenſeleſs be!
(*Striking the floor with her hands*)
O open and receive me,
Ye happy things of ſtill and lifeleſs being,
That to the awful ſteps which tread upon ye
Unconſcious are!
(*Enter* CATHRINA *behind her.*)
Who's there? Is't any thing?

Cath. 'Tis I, my deareſt Lady! 'tis Cathrina.

Or. (*embracing her*) How kind! Such bleſſed kindneſs! keep thee by me;
I'll hold thee faſt: an angel brought thee hither.
I needs muſt weep to think thou art ſo kind
In mine extremity. — Where wert thou hid?

Cath. In that ſmall cloſet, ſince the ſupper hour,
I've been conceal'd. For ſearching round the chamber,

I found its door, and enter'd. Fear not now:
I will not leave thee till the break of day.

Or. Heaven bleſs thee for it! Till the break of day!
The very thought of day-break gives me life.
If but this night were paſt, I have good hope
That noble Theobald will ſoon be here
For my deliv'rance.

Cath. Wherefore think'ſt thou ſo?

Or. A ſtranger, when thou left'ſt me on the ramparts,
Gave me a letter which I quickly open'd,
As ſoon as I, methought, had gain'd my room
In privacy; but cloſe behind me came
That Dæmon Rudigere, and, ſnatching at it,
Forced me to caſt it to the flames, from which,
I ſtruggling with him ſtill, he could not ſave it.

Cath. You have not read it then.

Or. No; but the ſeal
Was Theobald's, and I could ſwear ere long
He will be here to free me from this thraldom.

Cath. God grant he may!

Or. If but this night were paſt! How goes the time?
Has it not enter'd on the midnight watch?

Cath. (*pointing to a ſmall ſlab at the corner of the ſtage on which is placed a ſand-glaſs*)
That glaſs I've ſet to meaſure it. As ſoon
As all the ſand is run, you are ſecure;
The midnight watch is paſt.

Or. (*running to the glaſs and looking at it eagerly*)

There is not much to run: O an't were finiſh'd!
But it ſo ſlowly runs!

Cath. Yes; watching it,
It ſeemeth ſlow. But heed it not; the while,
I'll tell thee ſome old tale, and ere I've finiſh'd,
The midnight watch is gone. Sit down I pray!

(*They ſit*, Orra *drawing her chair cloſe to* Cathrina)

What ſtory ſhall I tell thee?

Or. Something, my friend, which thou thyſelf haſt known
Touching the awful intercourſe which ſpirits
With mortal men have held at this dread hour.
Did'ſt thou thyſelf e'er meet with one whoſe eyes
Had look'd upon the ſpectred dead — had ſeen
Forms from another world?

Cath. Never but once.

Or. (*eagerly*) Once then thou didſt! O tell it! Tell it me!

Cath. Well; ſince I needs muſt tell it, once I knew
A melancholy man, who did aver,
That, journ'ying on a time, o'er a wild waſte,
By a fell ſtorm o'erta'en, he was compell'd
To paſs the night in a deſerted tower,
Where a poor hind, the ſole inhabitant
Of the ſad place, prepared for him a bed.
And, as he told his tale, at dead of night,
By the pale lamp that in his chamber burn'd,
As it might be an arm's-length from his bed —

Or. So cloſe upon him?

Cath. Yes.

Or. Go on; what ſaw he?

Cath. An upright form, wound in a clotted ſhroud —

Clotted and ſtiff, like one ſwaith'd up in haſte
After a bloody death.

Or. O horrible!

Cath. He ſtarted from his bed and gaz'd upon it.

Or. And did he ſpeak to it?

Cath. He could not ſpeak.

It's viſage was uncover'd, and at firſt
Seem'd fix'd and ſhrunk, like one in coffin'd ſleep:
But, as he gaz'd, there came, he wiſt not how,
Into its beamleſs eyes a horrid glare,
And turning towards him, for it did move, ——
Why doſt thou graſp me thus?

Or. Go on, go on!

Cath. Nay, heaven forfend! Thy ſhrunk and ſharpen'd features
Are of the corſe's colour, and thine eyes
Are full of tears. How's this?

Or. I know not how.
A horrid ſympathy jarr'd on my heart,
And forced into mine eyes theſe icy tears.
A fearful kindredſhip there is between
The living and the dead: an awful bond:
Wo's me! that we do ſhudder at ourſelves —
At that which we muſt be! —— A diſmal thought!
Where doſt thou run? thy ſtory is not told:

(*Seeing* Cath. *go towards the ſand glaſs.*)

Cath. (*ſhewing the glaſs*) A better ſtory I will
tell thee now;
The midnight watch is paſt.

Or. Ha! let me ſee.

Cath. There's not one ſand to run.

Or. But it is barely paſt.

Cath. 'Tis more than paſt.
For I did ſet it later than the hour
To be aſſur'dly ſure.

Or. Then it is gone indeed: O heaven be
be praiſed!
The fearful gloom gone by!
(*Holding up her hands in gratitude to heaven, and then looking round her with cheerful animation*)
In truth already
I feel as if I breath'd the morning air:
I'm marvellouſly lighten'd.

Cath. Ne'ertheleſs,
Thou art forſpent; I'll run to my apartment
And fetch ſome cordial drops that will revive
thee.

Or. Thou need'ſt not go: I've ta'en thy
drops already:
I'm bold and buoyant grown.
(*Bounding lightly from the floor.*)

Cath. I'll ſoon return:
Thou art not fearful now?

Or. No; I breathe lightly;
Valour within me grows moſt powerfully,
Would'ſt thou but ſtay to ſee it, gentle Cathrine.

Cath. I will return to ſee it, ere thou canſt
Three times repeat the letters of thy name.

[EXIT. *haſtily by the concealed door.*)

Or. This burſt of courag ſhrinks moſt ſhamefully. (*Alone.*)
I'll follow her. —

(*Striving to open the door.*)

'Tis faſt: it will not open.
I'll count my footſteps as I pace the floor
Till ſhe return again.

(*Paces up and down, muttering to herſelf, when a horn is heard without, pauſing and ſounding three times, each time louder than before.*)

(*Orra runs again to the door.*)
Deſpair will give me ſtrength: where is the door?
Mine eyes are dark, I cannot find it now.
O God! protect me in this awful paſs!

(*After a pauſe, in which ſhe ſtands with her body bent in a cowering poſture, with her hands locked together, and trembling violently, ſhe ſtarts up and looks wildly round her.*)

There's nothing, yet I felt a chilly hand
Upon my ſhoulder preſs'd. With open'd eyes
And ears intent I'll ſtand. Better it is
Thus to abide the awful viſitation,
Than cower in blinded horror, ſtrain'd intenſely
With ev'ry beating of my goaded heart.

(*Looking round her with a ſteady ſternneſs, but ſhrinking again almoſt immediately.*)

I cannot do it: on this ſpot I'll hold me
In awful ſtillneſs.

(*Bending her body as before; then, after a momentary pauſe, preſſing both her hands upon her head*)

The icy ſcalp of fear is on my head, —
The life ſtirs in my hair: it is a ſenſe
That tells the nearing of unearthly ſteps,
Albeit my ringing ears no ſounds diſtinguiſh.

(*Looking round, as if by irreſiſtible impulſe to a great door at the bottom of the ſtage, which burſts open, and the form of a huntſman, cloathed in black with a horn in his hand, enters and advances towards her. She utters a loud ſhriek, and falls ſenſeleſs on the ground.*)

Theo. (*running up to her and raiſing her from the ground*)

No ſemblance but real agony of fear.
Orra, oh Orra! Know'ſt thou not my voice?
Thy knight, thy champion, the devoted Theobald?
Open thine eyes and look upon my face:

(*Unmaſking.*)

I am no fearful waker from the grave:
Doſt thou not feel? 'Tis the warm touch of life.
Look up and fear will vaniſh. — Words are vain!
What a pale countenance of ghaſtly ſtrength
By horrour changed! O ideot that I was!
To hazard this! — The villain hath deceiv'd me!
My letter ſhe has ne'er received. Oh Fool!
That I ſhould truſt to this!

(*Beating his head diſtractedly.*)

(*Enter* FRANKO, *by the ſame door.*)

Frank. What is the matter? What ſtrange turn is this?

Theo. O curſed ſanguine fool! could I not think ——

She moves — ſhe moves! rouſe thee, my gentle Orra!

'Tis no ſtrange voice that calls thee: 'tis thy friend.

Frank. She opens now her eyes.

Theo. But oh that look!

Frank. She knows thee not, but gives a ſtifled groan

And ſinks again in ſtupor.

Make no more fruitleſs lamentation here,

But bear her hence: the cool and open air

May ſoon reſtore her. Let us, while we may,

Occaſion ſeize, leſt we ſhould be ſurpriſed.

[EXEUNT, Orra *borne off in a ſtate of inſenſibility.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The great Hall of the Caſtle: Enter* RUDIGERE, CATHRINA, *and Attendants, by different Doors.*

Rud. (*To* Attend.) Return'd again! Is any thing diſcover'd?
Or door or paſſage? garment dropt in haſte?
Or footſtep's track, or any mark of flight?
1ſt Att. No, by my faith! tho' from its higheſt turrets
To its deep vaults, the caſtle we have ſearch'd.
Cath. 'Tis vain to trace the marks of trackleſs feet.
If that in truth it hath convey'd her hence,
The yawning earth has yielded them a paſſage,
Or elſe, thro' rifted roofs the buoyant air.
Rud. Fools! ſearch again. I'll raze the very walls
From their foundations but I will diſcover
If door or paſs there be, to us unknown.
Ho! Gomez there!
(*Calling off the ſtage.*)
He keeps himſelf aloof,
Nor aids the ſearch with true and hearty will.
I am betray'd. — Ho! Gomez there, I ſay!
He ſhrinks away: go drag the villain hither,
And let the torture wring confeſſion from him.
(*A loud knocking heard at the gate.*)

Ha! who ſeeks entrance at this early hour
In ſuch a deſert place?

Cath. Some hind, perhaps,
Who brings intelligence. Heaven grant it be!

(*Enter an armed* Vaſſal.)

Rud. Ha! One from Aldenberg! What brings thee hither:

Vaſſ. (*ſeizing* Rud.) Thou art my priſoner.
(*To* Attendants.)
Upon your peril,
Aſſiſt me to ſecure him.

Rud. Audacious hind! by what authority
Speak'ſt thou ſuch bold commands? Produce thy warrant.

Vaſſ. 'Tis at the gate, and ſuch as thou muſt yield to:
Count Hughobert himſelf, with armed men,
A goodly band, his pleaſure to enforce.
(*Secures him.*)

Rud. What ſudden freak is this? am I ſuſpected
Of aught but true and honourable faith?

Vaſſ. Aye, by our holy Saints! more than ſuſpected.
Thy creature Maurice, whom thou thought'ſt to bribe
With things of ſeeming value, hath diſcover'd
The cunning fraud; on which his tender conſcience,
Good ſoul! did o'the ſudden ſo upbraid him,
That to his Lord forthwith he made confeſſion

Of all the plots againſt the Lady Orra,
In which thy wicked arts had tempted him
To take a wicked part. All is diſcover'd.
Cath. (*aſide*) All is diſcover'd! Where then
ſhall I hide me?
(*Aloud to* Vaſſ.) What is diſcover'd?
Vaſſ. Ha! moſt virtuous Lady!
Art thou alarmed? Fear not: the world well
knows
How good thou art; and to the Counteſs ſhortly,
Who with her Lord is near, thou wilt no doubt
Give good account of all that thou haſt done.
Cath. (*aſide as ſhe retires in agitation*)
O heaven forbid! What hole o' th' earth will
hide me!

[EXIT.

(*Enter by the oppoſite ſide*, HUGHOBERT, ELEANORA, HELEN, GLOTTENBAL, URSTON, MAURICE, and Attendants.)

Hug. (*ſpeaking as he enters*) Is he ſecured?
Vaſſ. He is, my Lord; behold!
(*pointing to* Rud.)
Hugh. (*to* Rud.) Black artful traitor! Of a
ſacred truſt,
Blindly repoſed in thee, the baſe betrayer
For wicked ends; full well upon the ground
May'ſt thou decline thoſe darkly frowning eyes,
And gnaw thy lip in ſhame.
Rud. And reſts no ſhame with him, whoſe
eaſy faith

Entrufts a man unproved; or, having proved him,
Lets a poor hireling's unfupported teftimony
Shake the firm confidence of many years?
Hugh. Here the accufer ftands; confront him boldly,
And fpare him not.
(*Bringing forward* Maurice.)
Maur. (*to* Rud.) Deny it if thou canft. Thy brazen front,
All brazen as it is, denies it not.
Rud. (*to* Mau.) Fool! that of prying curiofity
And av'rice art compounded! I in truth
Did give to thee a counterfeited treafure
To bribe thee to a counterfeited truft;
Meet recompence! Ha, ha! Maintain thy tale,
For I deny it not. (*With careleſs derifion.*)
Maur. O fubtile traitor!
Doft thou fo varnifh it with feeming mirth?
Hugh. Sir Rudigere, thou doft, I muft confefs,
Out-face him well. But call the Lady Orra;
If towards her thou haft thyfelf comported
In honefty, fhe will declare it freely.
Bring Orra hither. (*To* Attendant.)
1ſt Attend. Would that we could; laft night i' the midnight watch
She difappear'd; but whether man or devil
Hath borne her hence, in truth we cannot tell.
Hugh. O both! Both man and devil together join'd.

(*To* Rud. *furiouſly.*) Fiend, villain, murderer!
Produce her inſtantly.
Dead or alive, produce thy hapleſs charge.
Rud. Reſtrain your rage, my Lord; I would right gladly
Obey you, were it poſſible: the place,
And the myſterious means of her retreat,
Are both to me unknown.
Hugh. Thou lieſt! thou lieſt!
Glot. (*coming forward*) Thou lieſt, beaſt, villain, traitor! think'ſt thou ſtill
To fool us thus? Thou ſhalt be forced to ſpeak.
(*To* Hugh.) Why loſe we time in words when other means
Will quickly work? Straight to thoſe pillars bind him,
And let each ſturdy varlet of your train
Inflict correction on him.
Maur. Aye, this alone will move him.
Hugh. Thou ſay'ſt well:
By heaven it ſhall be done!
Rud. And will Count Hughobert degrade in me
The blood of Aldenberg to ſhame himſelf?
Hugh. That plea avails thee not; thy ſpurious birth
Gives us full warrant, as thy conduct varies,
To reckon thee or noble or debas'd.
(*To* Att.) Straight bind the traitor to the place of ſhame.
(*As they are ſtruggling to bind* Rud. *he gets one of his hands free, and, pulling out a*

dagger from under his clothes, ſtabs himſelf.)

Rud. Now, take your will of me, and drag my corſe
Thro' mire and duſt; your ſhameleſs fury now
Can do me no diſgrace.

Urſton (*advancing*)

Raſh, daring, thoughtleſs wretch! doſt thou ſo cloſe
A wicked life in hardy deſperation?

Rud. Prieſt, ſpare thy words: I add not to my ſins
That of preſumption, in pretending now
To offer up to Heaven the forced repentance
Of ſome ſhort moments for a life of crimes.

Urſt. My ſon, thou doſt miſtake me: let thy heart
Confeſſion make ———

Glot. (*interrupting* Urſt.) Yes, dog! Confeſſion make
Of what thou'ſt done with Orra; elſe I'll ſpurn thee,
And caſt thy hateful carcaſe to the kites.

Hugh. (*pulling back* Glot. *as he is going to ſpurn* Rud. *with his foot, who is now fallen upon the ground.*)

Nay, nay, forbear; ſuch outrage is unmanly.

(Eleanora, *who with* Alice *had retired from the ſhocking ſight of* Rudigere, *now comes forward to him.*)

El. Oh, Rudigere! thou art a dying man,
And we will ſpeak to thee without upbraiding.
Confeſs, I do entreat thee, ere thou goeſt

To thy moſt awful change, and leave us not
In this our horrible uncertainty.
Is Orra here conceal'd?
Al. Thou haſt not ſlain her?
Confeſſion make, and heaven have mercy on thee!
Rud. Yes, Ladies; with theſe words of gentle meekneſs
My heart is changed; and that you may perceive
How greatly changed, let Glottenbal approach me;
Spent am I now, and can but faintly ſpeak —
Ev'n unto him, in token of forgiveneſs,
I'll tell what ye deſire.
El. Thank heaven, thou art ſo changed!
Hugh. (*to* Glot.) Go to him, boy.
(Glottenbal *goes to* Rudigere, *and ſtooping over him to hear what he has to ſay,* Rudigere, *taking a ſmall dagger from his boſom, ſtrikes* Glottenbal *on the neck.*)
Glot. Oh, he has wounded me! — Deteſted traitor!
Take that and that; would thou had'ſt ſtill a life
For every thruſt. (*Killing him.*)
Hugh. (*alarmed*) Ha! Has he wounded thee, my ſon?
Glot. A ſcratch;
'Tis nothing more. He aim'd it at my throat,
But had not ſtrength to thruſt.

Hugh. Thank God, he had not!

(*A trumpet ſounds without.*)

Hark, martial notice of ſome high approach!
(*To* Attendants) Go to the gate.

[EXEUNT Attendants.

El. Who may it be? This caſtle is remote
From every route which armed leaders take.

(*Enter a* Servant.)

Ser. The banneret of Baſle is at the gate.

Hugh. Is he in force?

Ser. Yes, thro' the trees his diſtant bands are ſeen
Some hundreds ſtrong, I gueſs; tho' with himſelf
Two followers only come.

(*Enter* HARTMAN *attended.*)

Hugh. Forgive me, banneret, if I receive thee
With more ſurpriſe than courteſy. How is it?
Com'ſt thou in peace?

Hart. To you, my Lord, I frankly will declare
The purpoſe of my coming: having heard it,
It is for you to ſay if I am come,
As much I wiſh, in peace.
(*To* El.) Counteſs, your preſence much emboldens me
To think it ſo ſhall be.

Hugh. (*impatiently*) Proceed, I beg.
When burghers gentle courteſy affect,
It chafes me more than all their ſturdy boaſting.

Hart. Then with a burgher's plainneſs, Hughobert,
I'll try my tale to tell, — nice taſk I fear!
So that it may not gall a baron's pride.
Brave Theobald, the Lord of Falkenſtein,
Co-burgher alſo of our ancient city,
Whoſe cauſe of courſe is ours, declares himſelf
The ſuitor of thy ward the Lady Orra;
And learning that within theſe walls ſhe is,
By thine authority, in durance kept,
In his behalf I come to ſet her free;
As an oppreſſed Dame, ſuch ſervice claiming
From every gen'rous knight. What is thy anſwer?
Say, am I come in peace? Wilt thou releaſe her?

Hugh. Ah, would I could! In faith thou gall'ſt me ſhrewdly.

Hart. I've been inform'd of all that now diſturbs you,
By one who held me waiting at the gate.
Until the maid be found, if 'tis your pleaſure,
Ceaſe enmity.

Hugh. Then let it ceaſe. A traitor has deceived me,
And there he lies.

(*Pointing to the body of* Rud.)

Hart. (*looking at the body*)
A ghaſtly ſmile of fell malignity
On his diſtorted face death has arreſted.

(*Turning again to* Hugh.)
And has he died, and no confeſſion made?

All means that may diſcover Orra's fate
Shut from us?

Hugh. Ah! the fiend hath utter'd nothing
That could betray his ſecret. If ſhe lives ——

El. Alas, alas! think you he murder'd her?

Al. Merciful heaven forfend!

(*Enter a* Soldier *in haſte.*)

Sold. O, I have heard a voice, a diſmal voice!

Omnes. What haſt thou heard?

El. What voice?

Sold. The Lady Orra's.

El. Where? Lead us to the place.

Hugh. Where did'ſt thou hear it, Soldier?

Sold. In a deep tangled thicket of the wood,
Cloſe to a ruin'd wall, o'ergrown with ivy,
That marks the ancient out-works of the caſtle.

Hugh. Haſte; lead the way.

[EXEUNT *all eagerly, without order, following the* Soldier, Glottenbal *and one* Attendant *excepted.*

Att. You do not go, my Lord?

Glot. I'm ſick, and ſtrangely dizzy grows my head,
And pains ſhoot from my wound. It is a ſcratch,
But from a devil's fang. — There's miſchief in it.
Give me thine arm, and lead me to a couch:
I'm very faint.

Att. This way, my Lord, there is a chamber near.

[EXEUNT Glottenbal, *ſupported by the* Attendant.

SCENE II.

The Foreſt near the Caſtle; in Front a rocky Bank crowned with a ruined Wall o'ergrown with Ivy, and the Mouth of a Cavern ſhaded with Buſhes: Enter FRANKO, *conducting* HUGHOBERT, HARTMAN, ELEANORA, ALICE, *and* URSTON, *the* Soldier *following them.*

Frank. (*to* Hugh.) This is the entry to our
ſecret haunts.
And now, my Lord, having inform'd you truly
Of the device, well meant, but moſt unhappy,
By which the Lady Orra from her priſon
By Falkenſtein was ta'en; myſelf, my outlaws,
Unhappy men that better days have ſeen,
Drove to this lawleſs life by hard neceſſity,
Are on your mercy caſt.

Hugh. Which ſhall not fail you, valiant Franko.
Much
Am I indebted to thee: had'ſt thou not
Of thine own free good will become our guide,
As wand'ring here thou found'ſt us, we had
ne'er
The ſpot diſcover'd; for this honeſt Soldier,
A ſtranger to the foreſt, fought in vain
To thread the tangled path.

El. (*to* Frank.) She is not well thou ſay'ſt,
and from her ſwoon
Imperfectly recover'd.

Frank. When I left her,
She ſo appear'd. — But enter not, I pray,

Till I give notice. — Holla, you within!
Come forth and fear no ill.

(*A ſhriek heard from the cave.*)

Omnes. What diſmal ſhriek is that?

Al. 'Tis Orra's voice.

El. No, no! it cannot be! It is ſome wretch,
In maniac's fetters bound.

Hart. The horrid thought that burſts into my mind!
Forbid it, righteous Heaven!

(*Running into the cave, he is prevented by* Theobald, *who ruſhes out upon him.*)

Theo. Hold, hold! no entry here but o'er my corſe,
When ye have maſter'd me.

Hart. My Theobald!
Doſt thou not know thy friends?

Theo. Ha! thou, my Hartman! Art thou come to me?

Hart. Yes, I am come. What means that look of anguiſh?
She is not dead?

Theo. Oh, no! it is not death!

Hart. What mean'ſt thou? Is ſhe well?

Theo. Her body is.

Hart. And not her mind? —— Oh direſt wreck of all!
That noble mind! —— But 'tis ſome paſſing ſeizure,
Some powerful movement of a tranſient nature;
It is not madneſs?

Theo. (*ſhrinking from him, and burſting into tears*)
'Tis heaven's infliction; let us call it ſo;
Give it no other name. (*Covering his face.*)
El. (*to* Theo.) Nay do not thus deſpair: when ſhe beholds us,
She'll know her friends, and, by our kindly ſoothing,
Be gradually reſtored.
Al. Let me go to her.
Theo. Nay forbear, I pray thee;
I will myſelf with thee, my worthy Hartman,
Go in and lead her forth,
(Theobald *and* Hartman *go into the cavern, while thoſe without wait in deep ſilence, which is only broken once or twice by a ſcream from the cavern and the ſound of* Theobald's *voice ſpeaking ſoothingly, till they return, leading forth* Orra, *with her hair and dreſs diſordered, and the appearance of wild diſtraction in her gait and countenance.*)
Or. (*ſhrinking back as ſhe comes from under the ſhade of the trees, &c. and dragging* Theobald *and* Hartman *back with her.*)
Come back, come back! The fierce and fiery light!
Theo. Shrink not, deár love! it is the light of day.
Or. Have cocks crow'd yet?
Theo. Yes; twice I've heard already
Their mattin ſound. Look up to the blue ſky;

Is it not day-light there? And theſe green boughs
Are freſh and fragrant round thee: every ſenſe
Tells thee it is the cheerful early day.
Or. Aye, ſo it is; day takes his daily turn,
Riſing between the gulphy dells of night
Like whiten'd billows on a gloomy ſea.
Till glow-worms gleam, and ſtars peep thro' the dark,
And will-o'-the-wiſp his dancing taper light,
They will not come again.
(*Bending her ear to the ground*)
Hark, hark! Aye, hark:
They are all there: I hear their hollow ſound
Full many a fathom down.
Theo. Be ſtill, poor troubled ſoul! they'll ne'er return:
They are for ever gone. Be well aſſured
Thou ſhalt from henceforth have a cheerful home
With crackling faggots on thy midnight fire,
Blazing like day around thee; and thy friends—
Thy living, loving friends ſtill by thy ſide,
To ſpeak to thee and cheer thee.—See my Orra!
They are beſide thee now; doſt thou not know them? (*Pointing to* Eleanora *and* Alice.)
Or. (*gazing at them with her hand held up to ſhade her eyes*)
No, no! athwart the wav'ring gariſh light,
Things move and ſeem to be, and yet are nothing.

El. (*going near her*) My gentle Orra! haſt
thou then forgot me?
Doſt thou not know my voice?
Or. 'Tis like an old tune to my ear return'd.
For there be thoſe, who ſit in cheerful halls
And breathe ſweet air, and ſpeak with pleaſant
ſounds;
And once I liv'd with ſuch; ſome years gone
by;
I wot not now how long.
Hugh. Keen words that rend my heart!—
Thou had'ſt a home,
And one whoſe faith was pledged for thy pro-
tection.
Urſt. Be more compoſed, my Lord, ſome faint
remembrance
Returns upon her with the well-known ſound
Of voices once familiar to her ear.
Let Alice ſing to her ſome fav'rite tune,
That may loſt thoughts recall.
(Alice *ſings an old tune, and* Orra, *who
liſtens eagerly and gazes on her while ſhe
ſings, afterwards burſts into a wild laugh.*)
Or. Ha, ha! the witched air ſings for thee
bravely.
Hoot owls thro' mantling fog for mattin birds?
It lures not me. — I know thee well enough:
The bones of murder'd men thy meaſure beat,
And fleſhleſs heads nod to thee. — Off, I ſay!
Why are ye here? — That is the bleſſed ſun.
El. Ah, Orra! do not look upon us thus!
Theſe are the voices of thy loving friends

That ſpeak to thee: this is a friendly hand
That preſſes thine ſo kindly.

(*Putting her hand upon* Orra's, *who gives a loud ſhriek and ſhrinks from her with horror.*)

Hart. O grievous ſtate. (*Going up to her*) What terror ſeizes thee?

Or. Take it away! It was the ſwathed dead:
I know its clammy, chill, and bony touch.

(*Fixing her eyes fiercely on* Eleanora)

Come not again; I'm ſtrong and terrible now:
Mine eyes have look'd upon all dreadful things;
And when the earth yawns, and the hell-blaſt ſounds,
I'll 'bide the trooping of unearthly ſteps
With ſtiff-clench'd, terrible ſtrength.

(*Holding her clenched hands over her head with an air of grandeur and defiance.*)

Hugh. (*beating his breaſt*)
A murd'rer is a guiltleſs wretch to me.

Hart. Be patient; 'tis a momentary pitch;
Let me encounter it.

(*Goes up to* Orra, *and fixes his eyes upon her, which ſhe, after a moment, ſhrinks from and ſeeks to avoid, yet ſtill, as if involuntarily, looks at him again.*)

Or. Take off from me thy ſtrangely-faſten'd eye:
I may not look upon thee, yet I muſt.

(*Still turning from him, and ſtill ſnatching a haſty look at him as before*)

Unfix thy baleful glance: Art thou a ſnake?

Something of horrid power within thee dwells.
Still, ſtill that powerful eye doth ſuck me in
Like a dark eddy to its wheeling core.
Spare me! O ſpare me, Being of ſtrange power,
And at thy feet my ſubject head I'll lay.
(*Kneeling to* Hartman, *and bending her head ſubmiſſively.*)
El. Alas, the piteous ſight! to ſee her thus;
The noble, generous, playful, ſtately Orra!
Theo. (*running to* Hartman, *and puſhing him away with indignation*)
Out on thy hateful and ungenerous guile!
Think'ſt thou I'll ſuffer o'er her wretched ſtate
The ſlighteſt ſhadow of a baſe controul?
(*Raiſing* Orra *from the ground*)
No, riſe thou ſtately flower with rude blaſts rent;
As honour'd art thou with thy broken ſtem
And leafets ſtrew'd, as in thy ſummer's pride.
I've ſeen thee worſhip'd like a regal Dame
With ev'ry ſtudied form of mark'd devotion,
Whilſt I, in diſtant ſilence, ſcarcely proffer'd
Ev'n a plain ſoldier's courteſy; but now,
No liege-man to his crowned miſtreſs ſworn,
Bound and devoted is as I to thee;
And he who offers to thy alter'd ſtate
The ſlighteſt ſeeming of diminiſh'd rev'rence,
Muſt in my blood —— (*to* Hartman) O pardon me, my friend!
Thou'ſt wrung my heart.
Hart. Nay, do thou pardon me: I am to blame:

Thy nobler heart ſhall not again be wrung.
But what can now be done? O'er ſuch wild ravings
There muſt be ſome controul.

Theo. O none! none, none! but gentle ſympathy
And wathfulneſs of love.
My noble Orra!
Wander where'er thou wilt; thy vagrant ſteps
Shall follow'd be by one, who ſhall not weary,
Nor e'er detach him from his hopeleſs taſk;
Bound to thee now as faireſt, gentleſt beauty
Could ne'er have bound him.

Al. See how ſhe gazes on him with a look,
Subſiding gradually to ſofter ſadneſs,
Half ſaying that ſhe knows him.

El. There is a kindneſs in her changing eye.
Yes, Orra, 'tis the valiant Theobald,
Thy knight and champion, whom thou gazeſt on.

Or. The brave are like the brave; ſo ſhould it be.
He was a goodly man — a noble knight.
(*To* Theobald) What is thy name, young ſoldier? — Woe is me!
For prayers of grace are ſaid o'er dying men,
Yet they have laid thy clay in unbleſt earth —
Shame! ſhame! not with the ſtill'd and holy dead.
This ſhall be rectified; I'll find it out;
And maſſes ſhall be ſaid for thy repoſe;
Thou ſhalt not troop with theſe.

El. 'Tis not the dead, 'tis Theobald himſelf
Alive and well, who ſtandeth by thy ſide.
Or. (*looking wildly round*)
Where, where? All dreadful things are near me, round me,
Beneath my feet and in the loaded air.
Let him be gone! The place is horrible!
Baneful to fleſh and blood. —— The dreadful blaſt!
Their hounds now yell below i'the centre gulph;
They may not riſe again till ſolemn bells
Have given the ſtroke that ſevers night from morn.
El. O rave not thus! Doſt thou not know us Orra?
Or. (*haſtily*) Aye, well enough I know ye.
Urſt. Ha! think ye that ſhe does?
El. It is a terrible ſmile of recognition,
If ſuch it be.
Hart. Nay, do not thus your reſtleſs eye-balls move,
But look upon us ſteadily, ſweet Orra.
Or. Away! your faces waver to and fro;
I'll know you better in your winding-ſheets,
When the moon ſhines upon ye.
Theo. Give o'er, my Friends; you ſee it is in vain;
Her mind within itſelf holds a dark world
Of diſmal phantaſies and horrid forms!
Contend with her no more.

(*Enter an* Attendant *in an abrupt diſturb'd manner.*)

Att. (*to* Eleanor, *aſide*)
Lady I bring to you moſt diſmal news:
Too grievous for my Lord, ſo ſuddenly
And unprepar'd, to hear.
El. (*aſide*) What is it? Speak.
Att. (*aſide to* El.) His ſon is dead, all ſwell'd and rack'd with pain;
And on the dagger's point, which the fly traitor
Still in his ſtiffen'd graſp retains, foul ſtains,
Like thoſe of limed poiſon, ſhew full well
The wicked cauſe of his untimely death.
Hugh. (*overhearing them*)
Who ſpeaks of death? What did'ſt thou whiſper there?
How is my ſon? —— What look is that thou wear'ſt?
He is not dead? —— Thou doſt not ſpeak! O God!
I have no ſon.
(*After a pauſe*)
I am bereft! —— But this!
But only him! — Heaven's vengeance deals the ſtroke.
Urſt. Heaven oft in mercy ſmites ev'n when the blow
Severeſt is.
Hugh. I had no other hope.
Fell is the ſtroke, if mercy in it be!
Could this — could this alone atone my crime?

Urſt. Submit thy ſoul to Heaven's all-wiſe decree.
Perhaps his life had blaſted more thy hopes
Than ev'n his grievous end.
Hugh. He was not all a father's heart could wiſh;
But oh, he was my ſon! — my only ſon:
My child — the thing that from his cradle grew
And was before me ſtill. — Oh, oh! Oh, oh!
(*Beating his breaſt, and groaning deeply.*)
Or. (*running up to him*)
Ha! doſt thou groan, old man? Art thou in trouble?
Out on it! tho' they lay him in the mould,
He's near thee ſtill. — I'll tell thee how it is:
A hideous burſt hath been: the damn'd and holy,
The living and the dead, together are
In horrid neighbourſhip. — 'Tis but thin vapour,
Floating around thee, makes the wav'ring bound.
Poh! blow it off, and ſee th'uncurtain'd reach.
See! from all points they come; earth caſts them up!
In grave-clothes ſwath'd are thoſe but new in death;
And there be ſome half bone, half caſed in ſhreds
Of that which fleſh hath been; and there be ſome
With wicker'd ribs, thro' which the darkneſs ſcowls.
Back, back! — They cloſe upon us. — Oh the void

Of hollow unball'd ſockets ſtaring grimly,
And lipleſs jaws that move and clatter round us
In mockery of ſpeech! — Back, back, I ſay!
Back, back!

(*Catching hold of* Hughobert *and* Theobald, *and dragging them back with her in all the wild ſtrength of frantic horror, whilſt the curtain drops.*)

THE END.

THE DREAM:

A TRAGEDY, IN PROSE,

IN THREE ACTS.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

OSTERLOO, *an Imperial General.*
Prior *of the Monaſtery.*
BENEDICT, JEROME, PAUL, } *Monks.*
MORAND, WOVELREID, } *Officers in the Service of the* Prior.
The Imperial Ambaſſador.
Officers *ſerving under* Oſterloo.
Sexton, Monks, Soldiers, Peaſants, &c.

WOMEN.

LEONORA.
AGNES.

Scene, *the Monaſtery of St. Maurice in Switzerland; a Caſtle near it.*

Time, *the middle of the* 14*th Century.*

THE DREAM.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Court within the Monaſtery, with a grated iron Gate opening into an outer Court, through which are ſeen ſeveral Peaſants waiting*; JEROME *is diſcovered on the front of the Stage, walking backwards and forwards in a diſturbed Manner, then ſtopping and ſpeaking to himſelf.*

Jer. TWICE in one night the ſame awful viſion repeated! And Paul alſo terrified with a ſimilar viſitation! This is no common accidental mimicry of ſleep: the ſhreds and remnants of our day-thoughts, put together at night in ſome fantaſtic incongruous form, as the drifting clouds of a broken-up ſtorm piece themſelves again into uncertain ſhapes of rocks and animals. No, no! there muſt be ſome great and momentous meaning in this.

(*Enter* BENEDICT *behind him.*)

Ben. Some great and momentous meaning in this! What art thou muſing upon?

Jer. Be ſatisfied! be ſatisfied! It is not always fitting that the mind ſhould lay open the things it is buſy withal, though an articulate ſound may ſometimes eſcape it to ſet curioſity on the rack. Where is brother Paul? Is he ſtill at his devotions?

Ben. I believe ſo. But look where the poor Peaſants are waiting without: it is the hour when they expect our benefactions. Go, and ſpeak to them: thou haſt always been their favourite confeſſor, and they want conſolation.

(*Beckoning the* Peaſants, *who thereupon advance through the gate, while* Jerome *ſtretches out his hand to prevent them.*)

Jer. Stop there! Come not within the gates! I charge you advance no farther. (*To* Benedict *angrily*) There is death and contagion in every one of them, and yet thou would'ſt admit them ſo near us. Doſt thou indeed expect a miracle to be wrought in our behalf? Are we not fleſh and blood? and does not the grave yawn for us as well as other men?

(*To the* Peaſants *ſtill more vehemently*) Turn, I charge you, and retire without the gate.

1*ſt Peaſ.* Oh! be not ſo ſtern with us, good Father! There are ten new corpſes in the village ſince yeſterday, and ſcarcely ten men left in it with ſtrength enough to bury them. The beſt half of the village are now under ground, who, but three weeks gone by, were all alive and well. O do not chide us away!

2d Peaſ. God knows if any of us ſhall ever enter theſe gates again; and it revives us to come once a day to receive your bleſſings, good Fathers.

Jer. Well, and you ſhall have our bleſſing, my Children; but come not ſo near us; we are mortal men like yourſelves, and there is contagion about you.

1ſt Peaſ. Ah! no, no! Saint Maurice will take care of his own; there is no fear of you, Fathers.

Jer. I hope he will; but it is preſumptuous to tempt danger. Retire, I beſeech you, and you ſhall have relief given to you without the gates. If you have any love for us, retire.

(*The* Peaſants *retire.*)

Ben. Well, I feel a ſtrong faith within me, that our Saint, or ſome other good ſpirit, will take care of us. How is it that thou art ſo alarmed and ſo vehement with thoſe good people? It is not thy uſual temper.

Jer. Be ſatisfied, I pray thee: I cannot tell thee now. Leave me to myſelf a little while.—Would to God brother Paul were come to me! Ha! here he is.

(*Enter* PAUL; *and* JEROME, *after waiting impatiently till* BENEDICT *retires, advances to him eagerly.*)

Was it to a ſpot near the black monument in the ſtranger's burying vault, that it pointed?

Paul. Yes, to the very ſpot deſcribed by thee yeſterday morning, when thou firſt told'ſt me thy dream: and, indeed, every circumſtance of my laſt night's viſion ſtrongly reſembled thine; or rather, I ſhould ſay, was the ſame. The fixed frown of it's ghaſtly face ———

Jer. Aye, and the majeſtic motion of its limbs. Did it not wear a mantle over its right ſhoulder, as if for concealment rather than grace?

Paul. I know not; I did not mark that: but it ſtrode before me as diſtinctly as ever mortal man did before my waking ſight; and yet as no mortal man ever did before the waking ſight.

Jer. But it appeared to thee only once.

Paul. Only once; for I waked under ſuch a deep horror, that I durſt not go to ſleep again.

Jer. When it firſt appeared to me, as I told thee, the night before laſt, the form, though diſtinctly, was but faintly imaged forth; and methought it roſe more powerfully to my imagination as I told it to thee, than in the dream itſelf. But laſt night, when it returned, it was far more vivid than before. I waked indeed as thou did'ſt, impreſſed with a deep horror, yet irreſiſtible ſleep ſeized upon me again; and O how it appeared to me the third time, like a palpable, horrid reality! (*After a pauſe*) What is to be done?

Paul. What can be done? We can ſtop no diviſion of the Imperial army till one ſhall really march by this paſs.

Jer. And this is not likely; for I received a letter from a friend two days ago, by an expreſs meſſenger, who ſays, he had delayed ſending it, hoping to have it conveyed to me by one of Count Oſterloo's ſoldiers, who, with his diviſion, ſhould have marched through our paſs, but was now, he believed, to conduct them by a different route.

Paul. What noiſe and commotion is that near the gate?

(*Calling to thoſe without*)

Ho there! What is the matter?

1ſt Peaſ. (*without*) Nothing, Father; but we hear a trumpet at a diſtance, and they ſay, there is an army marching amongſt the mountains.

Jer. By all our holy ſaints, if it be ſo —

(*Calling again to the 1ſt* Peaſ.)

Are ye ſure it is trumpets you hear?

1ſt Peaſ. As ſure as we ever heard any ſound, and here is a lad too, who ſaw from the top-moſt crag, with his own eyes, their banners waving at a diſtance.

Jer. (*to* Paul) What think'ſt thou of it?

Paul. We muſt go to the Prior, and reveal the whole to him directly. Our own lives and thoſe of the whole brotherhood depend upon it; there can be no heſitation now.

Jer. Come then; loſe no time. We have a ſolemn duty impoſed upon us.

[EXEUNT.

SCENE II.

An open Space by the Gate of the Monaſtery, with a View of the Building on one Side, while Rocks and Mountains, wildly grand, appear in every other Direction, and a narrow Paſs through the Mountains opening to the bottom of the Stage. Several Peaſants, *both Men and Women, are diſcovered, waiting as if to ſee ſome Sight; a Trumpet and warlike Muſic heard at a little diſtance.*

1ſt Peaſ. Hear how it echoes amongſt the rocks: it is your true warlike ſound, that makes a man's heart ſtir within him, and his feet beat the ground to its meaſure.

2d Peaſ. Ah! what have our hearts to do with it now, miſerable as we are!

1ſt Peaſ. What have we to do with it! Speak for thyſelf. Were I to be laid in the grave this very night, it would rouſe me to hear thoſe ſounds which remind me of the battle of Laupen.

2d Peaſ. Well; look not ſo proudly at me: though I have not yet fought for my country, I am of a good ſtock nevertheleſs: my father loſt his life at Morgarten.

(*Calling up to* Morand, *who now appears ſcrambling down the ſides of the rocks*)
Are they near us, Lieutenant?

Mor. They'll be here in a trice. I know their Enſigns already: they are thoſe brave fellows under the command of Count Oſterloo, who

did ſuch good ſervice to the Emperor in his laſt battle.

3d Peaſ. (*Woman*) Aye; they be goodly men no doubt, and bravely accoutred I warrant ye.

4th Peaſ. (*Old Woman*) Aye, there be many a brave man amongſt them I trow, returning to his mother again. My Hubert never returned.

2d Peaſ. (*to* Mor.) Count Oſterloo! Who is he?

Mor. Did'ſt thou never hear of him? He has been in as many battles as thou haſt been in harveſt fields.

2d Peaſ. And won them too?

Mor. Nay, ſome of them he has won, and ſome he has loſt; but whether his own ſide were fighting or flying, he always kept his ground, or retreated like a man. The enemy never ſaw his back.

1ſt Peaſ. True, Lieutenant; I once knew an old ſoldier of Oſterloo's who boaſted much of his General: for his men are proud of him, and would go through flood and flame for his ſake.

Mor. Yes, he is affable and indulgent to them, although paſſionate and unreaſonable when provoked; and has been known to puniſh even his greateſt favourites ſeverely for a ſlight offence. I remember well, the officer I firſt ſerved under, being a man of this kidney, and ——

1ſt Peaſ. Hiſt, hiſt! the gates are thrown

open, and yonder come the Monks in procef-ſion with the Prior at their head.

(*Enter* Prior *and* Monks *from the Monaſtery, and range themſelves on one ſide of the ſtage.*)

Prior. (*to the Peaſants*) Retire, my Children, and don't come ſo near us. Don't ſtand near the ſoldiers as they paſs neither, but go to your houſes.

1*ſt Woman.* O bleſs St. Maurice and your holy reverence! We ſee nothing now but coffins and burials, and hear nothing but the ticking of the death-watch, and the tolling of bells: do let us ſtand here and look at the brave fight. Lord knows if any of us may be above ground to ſee ſuch another, a'n it were to paſs this way but a week hence.

Prior. Be it ſo then, Daughter, but keep at a diſtance on the rocks, where you may ſee every thing without communicating infection.

(*The* Peaſants *retire, climbing amongſt the rocks: then enter by the narrow paſs at the bottom of the ſtage,* Soldiers *marching to martial muſic, with* Officers *and* Oſterloo.)

Prior. (*advancing, and lifting up his hands with ſolemnity*)

Soldiers and Officers, and the noble Chief commanding this band! in the name of our patron St. Maurice, once like yourſelves a

valiant ſoldier upon earth, now a holy, powerful ſaint in heaven, I conjure you to halt.

1ſt Off. (*in the foremoſt rank*)
Say you ſo, reverend Prior, to men preſſing forward as we do, to ſhelter our head for the night, and that cold wintry ſun going down ſo faſt upon us?

1ſt Sold. By my faith! if we paſs the night here amongſt the mountains, it will take ſomething beſides prayers and benedictions to keep us alive.

2d Sold. Spend the night here amongſt chamois and eagles! Some miracle no doubt will be wrought for our accommodation.

1ſt Off. Murmur not, my Friends: here comes your General, who is always careful of you.

Oſt. (*advancing from the rear*)
What is the matter?

Prior. (*to* Oſt.) You are the commander in chief?

Oſt. Yes, reverend Father; and, with all reſpect and deference, let me ſay, the night advances faſt upon us, Martigny is ſtill at a good diſtance, and we muſt not be detained. With many thanks, then, for your intended civilities, we beg your prayers, holy Prior, with thoſe of your pious Monks, and crave leave to paſs on our way.

Prior. (*lifting his hands as before*)
If there be any piety in brave men, I conjure you in the name of St. Maurice to halt! The lives of our whole community depend upon it:

men, who for your lives have offered to heaven many prayers.

Oft. How may this be, my Lord? Who will attack your facred walls, that you fhould want any defence?

Prior. We want not, General, the fervice of your arms: my own troops, with the brave Captain who commands them, are fufficient to defend us from mortal foes.

Soldiers. (*murmuring*) Muft we fight with devils then?

Oft. Be quiet, my good Comrades. (*To* Prior) Well, my Lord, proceed.

Prior. A fatal peftilence rages in this neighbourhood; and by command of a vifion, which has appeared three times to the Senior of our order, and alfo to another of our brotherhood, threatening in cafe of difobedience, that the whole community fhall fall victims to the dreadful difeafe, we are compelled to conjure you to halt.

Oft. And for what purpofe?

Prior. That we may chufe by lot from the firft divifion of the Imperial army which marches through this pafs, (fo did the vifion precifely direct us,) a man, who fhall fpend one night within the walls of our monaftery; there to undergo certain penances for the expiation of long-concealed guilt.

Oft. This is very ftrange. By lot did you fay? It will be tedious. There are a hundred of my

men who will volunteer the ſervice. — What ſay ye, Soldiers?

1ſt Sold. Willingly, General, if you deſire it. Yet I marvel what greater virtue there can be in beleagring the war-worn hide of a poor ſoldier, than the fat ſides of a well-fed monk.

Oſt. Wilt thou do it, then?

1ſt Sold. Aye; and more than that, willingly, for my General. It is not the firſt time a cat-o'-nine-tails has been acroſs my back for other men's miſdeeds. Promiſe me a good flaſk of brandy when I'm done with it, and I warrant ye I'll never winch. As to the ſaying of Pater-noſters, if there be any thing of that kind tacked to it, I let you to wit my dexterity is but ſmall.

Oſt. Then be it as thou wilt, my good friend; yet I had as lief my own ſkin ſhould ſmart for it as thine, thou art ſuch a valiant fellow.

Prior. No, noble General, this muſt not be; we muſt have our man choſen by lot. The lives of the whole community depending upon it; we muſt ſtrictly obey the viſion.

Oſt. It will detain us long.

Prior. Nay, my Lord; the lots are already prepared. In the firſt place, ſix men only ſhall draw; four repreſenting the ſoldiers, and two the officers. If the ſoldiers are taken, they ſhall draw by companies, and the company that is taken ſhall draw individually; but if the lot falls to the officers, each of them ſhall draw for himſelf.

Oft. Let it be ſo; you have arranged it well. Produce the lots.

(*The* Prior *giving the ſign, a* Monk *advances, bearing a ſtand, on which are placed three vaſes, and ſets it near the front of the ſtage.*)

Prior. Now, brave Soldiers, let four from your body advance.

(Oft. *points to four men, who advance from the ranks.*)

Oft. And two from the officers, my Lord?

Prior. Even ſo, noble Count.

(Oft. *then points to two* Officers, *who, with the four* Soldiers, *draw lots from the ſmalleſt vaſe directed by the* Prior.)

1*ſt Sold.* (*ſpeaking to his comrades as the others are drawing*) This is ſtrange mummery i' faith! but it would have been no joke, I ſuppoſe, to have offended St. Maurice.

Prior. (*after examining the lots*) Soldiers, ye are free; it is your Officers who are taken.

1*ſt Sold.* (*as before*) Ha! the viſion is dainty it ſeems; it is not vulgar blood like ours, that will ſerve to ſtain the ends of his holy laſh.

(*A* Monk *having removed two of the vaſes, the* Prior *beckons the* Officers *to draw from the remaining one.*)

Prior. Stand not on order; let him who is neareſt put in his hand firſt.

1*ſt Sold.* (*aſide to the others as the* Officers *are drawing*)

Now by theſe arms! I would give a month's

pay that the lot ſhould fall on our prim, pompous lieutenant. It would be well worth the money to look in at one of their narrow windows, and ſee his dignified back-bone winching under the hands of a good brawny friar.

Oſt. (*aſide, unrolling his lot*)
Mighty heaven! Is fate or chance in this?

1ſt Off. (*aſide to* Oſt.) Have you got it, General? Change it for mine if you have.

Oſt. No no, my noble Albert; let us be honeſt; but thanks to thy generous friendſhip!

Prior. Now ſhew the lots. (*All the Officers ſhew their lots, excepting* Oſterloo, *who continues gloomy and thoughtful.*) Has no one drawn the fable ſcroll of election? (*To* Oſterloo) You are ſilent, my Lord; of what colour is your lot?

Oſt. (*holding out his ſcroll*)
Black as midnight.

(Soldiers *quit their ranks and crowd round* Oſterloo, *tumultuouſly.*)

1ſt Sold. Has it fallen upon our General; 'tis a damned lot — an unfair lot.

2d Sold. We will not leave him behind us, though a hundred St. Maurices commanded it.

3d Sold. Get within your walls again, ye cunning Friars.

1ſt Sold. A'n we ſhould lie i' the open air all night, we will not leave brave Oſterloo behind us.

Prior. (*to* Oſt.) Count, you ſeem gloomy and irreſolute: have the goodneſs to ſilence theſe

clamours. I am in truth as ſorry as any of your ſoldiers can be, that the lot has fallen upon you.

1ſt Off. (*aſide to* Oſt.) Nay, my noble friend, let me fulfil this penance in your ſtead. It is not now a time for ſcruples: the ſoldiers will be mutinous.

Oſt. Mutinous! Soldiers, return to your ranks. (*Looking at them ſternly as they ſeem unwillingly to obey*) Will you brave me ſo far that I muſt repeat my command?

(*They retire.*)

I thank thee, dear Albert. (*To 1ſt* Off.) Thou ſhalt do ſomething in my ſtead; but it ſhall not be the ſervice thou thinkeſt of. (*To* Prior) Reverend Father, I am indeed ſomewhat ſtruck at being marked out by fate from ſo many men; but, as to how I ſhall act thereupon, no wiſe irreſolute. (*To the* Sold.) Continue your march. The brave Albert ſhall conduct you to Martigny; and there you will remain under his command, till I join you again.

1ſt Sold. God preſerve you then, my noble General! and if you do not join us again by to-morrow evening, ſafe and ſound, we will not leave one ſtone of that building ſtanding on another.

Many Soldiers at once. So ſwear we all! So ſwear, &c.

Oſt. (*aſſuming a cheerful look*)

Go to, fooliſh Fellows! Were you to leave me in a den of lions, you could not be more apprehenſive. Will watching all night by ſome holy

ſhrine, or walking bare-foot through their midnight aiſles, be ſuch a hardſhip to one, who has paſſed ſo many nights with you all on the cold field of battle? Continue your march without delay; elſe theſe good fathers will count you no better than a band of new raiſed city troops, with ſome jolly tankard-chief for your leader. A good march to you, my friends, with kind hoſteſſes and warm fire-ſides where you are going.

1ſt Sold. Ah! What good will our fire-ſides do us, when we think how our General is lodged?

Oſt. Farewell! March on as quickly as you may: you ſhall all drink my health to-morrow evening in a good hogſhead of rheniſh.

1ſt Sold. (*with others*) God grant we may! (*1ſt to* Prior) Look to it, reverend Prior: if our General be not with us by to-morrow's ſunſet, St. Maurice will neither have monaſtery nor monks on this mountain.

Oſt. No more! (*Embracing firſt Officer, and ſhaking hands with others*) Farewell! Farewell!

(*The* Soldiers, *after giving him a loud cheer, march off with their* Officers *to martial muſic, and* EXEUNT Oſterloo, Prior, *and* Monks *into the monaſtery, while the* Peaſants *diſappear among ſt the rocks.* MANENT Morand *and* Agnes, *who has for ſome time appeared, looking over a crag.*)

Agn. Morand, Morand!

Mor. Ha! art thou there? I might have gueſſed indeed, that ſo brave a ſight would not eſcape thee. What made thee perch thyſelf like an eagle upon ſuch a cragg as that?

Agn. Chide not, good Morand, but help me down, leſt I pay a dearer price for my ſight than thou, with all thy grumbling, would'ſt wiſh.

(*He helps her down.*)

Mor. And now thou art going no doubt to tell the Lady Leonora, what a band of gallant fellows thou haſt ſeen.

Agn. Aſſuredly, if I can find in my heart to ſpeak of any but their noble leader. — What is his name? What meaning had all that drawing of lots in it? What will the monks do with him? Walk with me a little way towards the caſtle, brave Morand, and tell me what thou knoweſt.

Mor. I ſhould walk to the caſtle and miles beyond it too, ere I could anſwer ſo many queſtions, and I have duty in the monaſtery, beſides.

Agn. Come with me a little way, at leaſt.

Mor. Ah, Witch! thou knoweſt too well that I muſt always do what thou bideſt me.

[Exeunt.

SCENE III.

The Refectory of the Monaſtery, with a ſmall Table, on which are placed Refreſhments, diſcovered in one Corner. Enter OSTERLOO, Prior, BENEDICT, JEROME, *and* PAUL, *&c.*

Prior. Noble Oſterloo, let me welcome you here, as one appointed by heaven to purchaſe our deliverance from this dreadful malady; and I hope the price to be paid for it will not be a heavy one. Yet ere we proceed further in this matter, be entreated, I pray, to take ſome refreſhment after your long march.

(*The table is placed near the front of the ſtage.*)

Oſt. I thank you, my Lord; this is a gentle beginning to my penance: I will, then, by your leave.

(*Sitting down at the table*)

I have faſted long, and am indeed ſomewhat exhauſted.

(*After taking ſome refreſhment*)

Ah! My poor Soldiers! You muſt ſtill endure two hours' weary march, before you find ſuch indulgence. Your wine is good, reverend Father.

Prior. I am glad you find it ſo; it is old.

Oſt. (*cheerfully*) And your viands are good too; and your bread is delicious.

(*Drinking another cup*)

I ſhall have vigour now for any thing.——

Pray tell me ſomething more of thiswonderful viſion: was it a Saint or an Angel that appeared to the Senior Brother?

Prior. (*pointing to* Jerome)
He will anſwer for himſelf, and (*pointing to* Paul) this man ſaw it alſo.

Jer. It was neither Angel nor Saint, noble Count, but a mortal form wonderfully noble.

Oſt. And it appeared to you in the uſual manner of a dream?

Jer. It did; at leaſt I know no ſenſible diſtinction. A wavy envelopement of darkneſs preceded it, from which appearances ſeemed dimly to wake into form, till all was preſented before me in the full ſtrength of reality.

Paul. Nay, Brother, it broke upon me at once; a vivid diſtinct apparition.

Oſt. Well, be that as it may; what did appear to you? A mortal man, and very noble?

Jer. Yes, General. Methought I was rerurning from maſs, through the cloiſters that lead from the chapel, when a figure, as I have ſaid, appeared to me, and beckoned me to follow it. I did follow it; for at firſt I was neither afraid, nor even ſurpriſed; but ſo wonderfully it roſe in ſtature and dignity as it ſtrode before me, that, ere it reached the door of the ſtranger's burying vault, I was ſtruck with unaccountable awe.

Oſt. The ſtranger's burying vault!

Prior. Does any ſudden thought ſtrike you, Count?

Oft. No, no! here's your health, Fathers; (*drinking*) your wine is excellent.

Prior. But that is water you have juft now fwallowed: this is the wine.

Oft. Ha! is it? No matter, no matter! it is very good too. (*A long pauſe; Oſterloo with his eyes fixed thoughtfully on the ground.*)

Prior. Shall not our Brother proceed with his ſtory, General?

Oft. Moſt certainly: I have been liſtening for it.

Jer. Well then, as I have ſaid, at the door of the ſtranger's burying vault it ſtopped, and beckoned me again. It entered, and I followed it. There, through the damp mouldering tombs, it ſtrode ſtill before me, till it came to the farther extremity, as nearly as I could gueſs, two yards weſtward from the black marble monument; and then ſtopping and turning on me its fixed and ghaſtly eyes, it ſtretched out its hands ———

Oft. Its hands! Did you ſay, its hands?

Jer. It ſtretched out one of them; the other was covered with its mantle; and in a voice that ſounded — I know not how it ſounded ——

Paul. Aye, Brother; it was ſomething like a voice, at leaſt it conveyed words to the mind, though it was not like a voice neither.

Jer. Be that as you pleaſe: theſe words it ſolemnly uttered,—"Command the Brothers of this monaſtery, on pain of falling victims to the peſtilence now devaſtating the country, to ſtop

on its way the firſt diviſion of the Imperial army that ſhall march through your mountain paſs; and chuſe from it, by lot, a man who ſhall abide one night within theſe walls, to make expiation for long concealed guilt. Let the ſuffering be ſuch as the nature of the crime and the connection of the expiator therewith ſhall dictate. This ſpot of earth ſhall reveal—" It ſaid no more, but bent its eyes ſtedfaſtly upon me with a ſtern threatening frown, which became, as it looked, keener than the looks of any mortal being, and vaniſhed from my ſight.

Paul. Aye, that look; that laſt terrible look! it awoke me with terror, and I know not how it vaniſhed.

Jer. This has been repeated to me three times; laſt night twice in the courſe of the night, while brother Paul here was at the ſame time terrified with a ſimilar apparition.

Prior. This, you will acknowledge, Count, was no common viſitation, and could not but trouble us.

Oſt. You ſay well. ——— Yet it was but a dream.

Prior. True; it was but a dream, and as ſuch theſe pious men ſtrove to conſider it; when the march of your troops acroſs our mountains, a thing ſo unlikely to happen, compelled them to reveal to me, without loſs of time, what had appeared to them.

Oſt. A tall figure, you ſay, and of a noble aſpect?

Jer. Like that of a King, though habited more in the garb of a foreign ſoldier of fortune than of a ſtate ſo dignified.

(Oſterloo *riſes from table agitated.*)

Prior. What is the matter, General? Will you not finiſh your repaſt?

Oſt. I thank you; I have had enough. The night grows cold; I would rather walk than ſit.

(*Going haſtily to the bottom of the ſtage, and pacing to and fro.*)

Jer. (*aſide to* Paul *and the* Prior) What think ye of this?

Prior. (*aſide to* Jerome) His countenance changed ſeveral times as he liſtened to you: there is ſomething here different from common ſurpriſe on hearing a wonderful thing.

(*Enter a* Peaſant *by the bottom of the ſtage, bearing a torch.*)

Peaſ. (*eagerly, as he enters*) We have found it.

Oſt. (*ſtopping ſhort in his walk*) What haſt thou found?

Peaſ. What the Prior deſired us to dig for.

Oſt. What is that?

Peaſ. A grave.

(Oſterloo *turns from him ſuddenly, and paces up and down very rapidly.*)

Prior. (*to* Peaſ.) Thou haſt found it?

Peaſ. Aye, pleaſe you, and in the very ſpot, near the black monument, where your reverence deſired us to dig. And it is well you ſent

for my kinſman and I to do it, for there is not a lay-brother in the monaſtery ſtrong enough to raiſe up the great ſtones that covered it.

Prior. In the very ſpot, ſayeſt thou?

Peaſ. In the very ſpot.

Prior. Bear thy torch before us, and we'll follow thee.

Omnes. (*eagerly*, Oſterloo *excepted*)
Let us go immediately.

Prior. (*to* Oſterloo, *who ſtands fixed to the ſpot*)
Will not Count Oſterloo go alſo? It is fitting that he ſhould.

Oſt. (*rouſing himſelf*) O, moſt aſſuredly: I am perfectly ready to follow you.

[Exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A burying Vault, almoſt totally dark; the Monuments and Grave-ſtones being ſeen very dimly by the Light of a ſingle Torch, ſtuck by the Side of a deep open Grave, in which a* Sexton *is diſcovered, ſtanding leaning on his Mattock, and* Morand, *above Ground, turning up, with his ſheathed Sword, the looſe Earth about the Mouth of the Grave.*

Mor. THERE is neither ſcull nor bone amongſt this earth: the ground muſt have been newly broken up, when that coffin was let down into it.

Sex. So one ſhould think; but the earth here has the quality of conſuming whatever is put into it in a marvellous ſhort time.

Mor. Aye; the fleſh and more conſumable parts of a body; but hath it grinders in its jaws, like your carnivorous animal, to cranſh up bones and all? I have ſeen bones on an old field of battle, ſome hundred years after the action, lying whitened and hard in the ſun.

Sex. Well, a'nt be new ground, I'll warrant ye ſomebody has paid money enough for ſuch a good tenement as this: I could not wiſh my own father a better.

Mor. (*looking down*) The coffin is of an uncommon ſize: there muſt be a leaden one within it, I ſhould think.

Sex. I doubt that: it is only a clumſy ſhell that has been put together in haſte; and I'll be hanged if he who made it ever made another before it. Now it would pine me with vexation to think I ſhould be laid in ſuch a bungled piece of workmanſhip as this.

Mor. Aye; it is well for thoſe who ſhall bury thee, Sexton, that thou wilt not be a looker on at thine own funeral.——Put together in haſte, ſayeſt thou! How long may it be ſince this coffin was laid in the ground?

Sex. By my fay, now, I cannot tell; though many a grave I have dug in this vault, inſtead of the lay-brothers, who are mighty apt to take a cholic or ſhortneſs of breath, or the like, when any thing of hard labour falls to their ſhare. (*After pauſing*) Ha, now! I have it. When I went over the mountain ſome ten years ago to viſit my father-in-law, Baldwick, the ſtranger, who died the other day, after living ſo long as a hermit amongſt the rocks, came here; and it was ſhrewdly ſuſpected he had leave from our late Prior, for a good ſum of money, to bury a body privately in this vault. I was a fool not to think of it before. This, I'll be ſworn for it, is the place.

(*Enter the* Prior, Osterloo, Jerome, Paul, Benedict, *and other* Monks, *with the* Peasant *carrying light before them. They enter by an arched door at the bottom of the stage, and walk on to the front, when every one, but* Osterloo, *crowds eagerly to the grave, looking down into it.*)

Prior. (*to* Sexton) What hast thou found, friend?

Sex. A coffin a'nt please you, and of a size, too, that might almost contain a giant.

Omnes. (Osterloo *excepted*) The inscription—is there an inscription on it?

Sex. No, no! They who put these planks together had no time for inscriptions.

Omnes. (*as before*) Break it open:—break it open.

(*They crowd more eagerly about the grave, when, after a pause, the* Sexton *is heard wrenching open the lid of the coffin.*)

Omnes. (*as before*) What is there in it? What hast thou found, Sexton?

Sex. An entire skeleton, and of no common size.

Ost. (*in a quick hollow voice*) Is it entire?

Sex. (*after a pause*) No, the right hand is wanting, and there is not a loose bone in the coffin.

(Ost. *shudders and steps back.*)

Jer. (*to* Prior, *after a pause*) Will you not speak to him, Father? His countenance is changed, and his whole frame seems moved by some sudden convulsion.

(*The* Prior *remains ſilent*)

How is this? You are alſo changed, reverend Father. Shall I ſpeak to him?

Prior. Speak thou to him.

Jer. (*to* Oſterloo) What is the matter with you, General? Has ſome ſudden malady ſeized you?

Oſt. (*to* Jerome) Let me be alone with you, holy Prior; let me be alone with you inſtantly.

Jer. (*pointing*) This is the Prior.—He would be alone with you, Father: he would make his confeſſion to you.

Prior. I dare not hear him alone: there muſt be witneſſes. Let him come with me to my apartment.

Jer. (*to* Oſterloo, *as they leave the grave*) Let me conduct you, Count.

(*After walking from it ſome paces*)

Come on, my Lord, why do you ſtop ſhort?

Oſt. Not this way—not this way, I pray you.

Jer. What is it you would avoid?

Oſt. Turn aſide, I pray you; I cannot croſs over this.

Jer. Is it the grave you mean? We have left it behind us.

Oſt. Is it not there? It yawns acroſs our path, directly before us.

Je. Indeed, my Lord, it is ſome paces behind.

Oſt. There is deluſion in my ſight then; lead me as thou wilt.

[EXEUNT.

SCENE II.

The private Apartment of the Prior; *enter* BENEDICT, *looking round as he enters.*

Ben. Not yet come; aye, penitence is not very ſwift of foot.

(*Speaking to himſelf as he walks up and down*) Miſerable man!—brave, goodly creature!—but alas, alas! moſt ſubdued; moſt miſerable; and, I fear, moſt guilty!

Enter JEROME.

Jerome here!—Doſt thou know, Brother, that the Prior is coming here immediately to confeſs the penitent?

Jer. Yes, Brother; but I am no intruder; for he has ſummoned me to attend the confeſſion as well as thyſelf.

Ben. Methinks ſome other perſon of our order, unconcerned with the dreaming part of this buſineſs, would have been a leſs ſuſpicious witneſs.

Jer. Suſpicious! Am I more concerned in this than any other member of our community? Heaven appoints its own agents as it liſteth: the ſtones of theſe walls might have declared its awful will as well as the dreams of a poor friar.

Ben. True, brother Jerome; could they liſten to confeſſions as he does, and hold reveries upon them afterwards.

Jer. What doſt thou mean with thy reveries and confeſſions? Did not Paul ſee the terrible viſion as well as I?

Ben. If thou hadſt not revealed thy dream to him, he would have ſlept ſound enough, or, at worſt, have but flown over the pinnacles with his old mate the horned ſerpent, as uſual: and had the hermit Baldwick never made his death-bed confeſſion to thee, thou wouldſt never have had ſuch a dream to reveal.

Jer. Thinkeſt thou ſo? Then what brought Oſterloo and his troops ſo unexpectedly by this route? With all thy heretical diſlike to miraculous interpoſition, how wilt thou account for this?

Ben. If thou hadſt no ſecret intelligence of Oſterloo's route, to ſet thy fancy a working on the ſtory the hermit confeſſed to thee, I never wore cowl on my head.

Jer. Thoſe, indeed, who hear thee ſpeak ſo lightly of myſterious and holy things, will ſcarcely believe thou ever didſt. — But huſh! the Prior comes with his penitent; let us have no altercation now.

Enter Prior *and* OSTERLOO.

Prior. (*after a pauſe, in which he ſeems agitated*)

Now, Count Oſterloo, we are ready to hear your confeſſion. To myſelf and theſe pious Monks; men appointed by our holy religion to ſearch into the crimes of the penitent, unburthen

your heart of its terrible ſecret; and God grant you afterwards, if it be his righteous will, repentance and mercy.

Oſt. (*making a ſign, as if unable to ſpeak, then uttering rapidly*) Preſently, preſently.

Jer. Don't hurry him, reverend Father; he cannot ſpeak.

Ben. Take breath awhile, noble Oſterloo, and ſpeak to us when you can.

Oſt. I thank you.

Ben. He is much agitated. (*To* Oſterloo) Lean upon me, my Lord.

Prior. (*to* Benedict) Nay, you exceed in this. (*To* Oſterloo) Recollect yourſelf, General, and try to be more compoſed. You ſeem better now; endeavour to unburden your mind of its fatal ſecret; to have it labouring within your breaſt is protracting a ſtate of miſery.

Oſt. (*feebly*) I have voice now.

Jer. (*to* Oſterloo) Give to Heaven then, as you ought ——

Ben. Huſh, brother Jerome! no exhortations now! let him ſpeak it as he can. (*To* Oſterloo) We attend to you moſt anxiouſly.

Oſt. (*after ſtruggling for utterance*)
I ſlew him.

Prior. The man whoſe bones have now been diſcovered?

Oſt. The ſame: I ſlew him.

Jer. In the field, Count?

Oſt. No, no! many a man's blood has been on my hands there: — this is on my heart.

Prior. It is then premeditated murder you have committed.

Oft. (*haftily*) Call it fo, call it fo.

Jer. (*to* Oſterloo, *after a pauſe*) And is this all? Will you not proceed to tell us the circumſtances attending it?

Oft. Oh! they were terrible! — But they are all in my mind as the indiſtinct horrors of a frenzied imagination.

(*After a ſhort pauſe*)

I did it in a narrow paſs on St. Gothard, in the ſtormy twilight of a winter day.

Prior. You murdered him there?

Oft. I felt him dead under my graſp; but I looked at him no more after the laſt deſperate thruſt that I gave him. I hurried to a diſtance from the ſpot: when a ſervant, who was with me, ſeized with a ſudden remorſe, begged leave to return and remove the body, that, if poſſible, he might bury it in conſecrated ground, as an atonement for the part he had taken in the terrible deed. —— I gave him leave, with means to procure his deſire: — I waited for him three days, concealed in the mountains; — but I neither ſaw him, nor heard of him again.

Ben. But what tempted a brave man like Oſterloo to commit ſuch a horrible act?

Oft. The torments of jealouſy ſtung me to it. (*Hiding his face with his hands and then uncovering it*) I loved her, and was beloved: —— He came, — a noble ſtranger ——

Jer. Aye, if he was in his mortal ſtate, as I

in my dream beheld him, he was indeed moſt noble.

Oſt. (*waving his hand impatiently*)
Well, well! he did come, then, and ſhe loved me no more. —— With arts and enchantments he befotted her. ———————Even from her own lips I received ——

(*Toſſing up his arms violently, and then covering his face as before*)
But what is all this to you? Maimed as he was, having loſt his right arm in a battle with the Turks, I could not defy him to the field.———— ————After paſſing two nights in all the toſſing agony of a damned ſpirit, I followed him on his journey 'croſs the mountains. — On the twilight of the ſecond day, I laid wait for him in a narrow paſs; and as ſoon as his gigantic form darkened the path before me——— I have told you all.

Prior. (*eagerly*) You have not told his name.

Oſt. Did I not ſay Montera? He was a noble Hungarian.

Prior. (*much agitated*) He was ſo! — He was ſo. He was noble and beloved.

Jer. (*aſide to* Prior) What is the matter with you, reverend Father? Was he your Friend?

Prior. (*aſide to* Jerome) Speak not to me now, but queſtion the murderer as ye will.

Ben. (*overhearing the* Prior)
He is indeed a murderer, reverend Father, but he is our penitent.

Prior. Go to! what are names? — Aſk him what queſtions you will, and finiſh the confeſſion quickly.

Ben. (*to* Oſterloo) But have you never till now confeſſed this crime; nor in the courſe of ſo many years reflected on its dreadful turpitude?

Oſt. The active and adventurous life of a ſoldier is moſt adverſe to reflection: but often, in the ſtillneſs of midnight, the remembrance of this terrible deed has come powerfully upon me; till morning returned, and the noiſe of the camp began, and the fortunes of the day were before me.

Prior. (*in a ſevere voice*)

Thou haſt indeed been too long permitted to remain in this hardened ſtate. But heaven, ſooner or later, will viſit the man of blood with its terrours. Sooner or later, he ſhall feel that he ſtands upon an awful brink; and ſhort is the ſtep which engulphs him in that world, where the murdered and the murderer meet again, in the tremendous preſence of him, who is the Lord and giver of life.

Oſt. You believe then in ſuch ſevere retribution?

Prior. I believe in it as in my own exiſtence,

Oſt. (*turning to* Jerome *and* Benedict) And you, good Fathers, you believe in this?

Ben. Nature teaches this as well as revelation: we muſt believe it.

Jer. Some preſumptuous minds, dazzled with

the ſunſhine of proſperity, have dared to doubt; but to us, in the ſober ſhade of life; viſited too, as we have now been, by viſions preternatural and awful, it is a thing of certainty, rather than of faith.

Oſt. That ſuch things are! — It makes the brain confuſed and giddy. — Theſe are tremendous thoughts.

(*Leans his back againſt the wall, and gazes fixedly on the ground.*)

Prior. Let us leave him to the bitterneſs of his thoughts. We now muſt deliberate with the brethren on what is to be done. There muſt be no delay: the night advances faſt. Conduct him to another apartment: I muſt aſſemble a council of the whole order.

Jer. (*to* Oſterloo) We muſt lead you to another apartment, Count, while we conſider what is to be done.

Oſt. (*rouſed*) Aye, the expiation you mean: let it be ſevere; if atonement in this world may be made.

(*Turning to* Prior *as* Jerome *leads him off*) Let your expiation be ſevere, holy Father: a ſlight penance matches not with ſuch a crime as mine.

Prior. Be well aſſured it ſhall be what it ought.

Oſt. (*turning again and catching hold of the* Prior's *robe*) I regard not bodily pain. In battle once, with the head of a broken arrow in my thigh, I led on the charge, and ſuſtained all

the exertions of a well-fought field, till night clofed upon our victory. Let your penance be fevere, my reverend Father; I have been long acquainted with pain.

[Exeunt Oſterloo *and* Jerome.

Ben. You ſeem greatly moved, Father; but it is not with pity for the wretched. You would not deſtroy ſuch a man as this, though his crime is the crime of blood?

Prior. He ſhall die: ere another ſun dawn on theſe walls, he ſhall die.

Ben. Oh, ſay not ſo! Think of ſome other expiation.

Prior. I would think of another, were there any other more dreadful to him than death.

Ben. He is your penitent.

Prior. He is the murderer of my brother.

Ben. Then Heaven have mercy on him, if he muſt find none here! ——— Montero was your brother?

Prior. My only brother. It were tedious to tell thee now, how I was ſeparated from him after the happy days of our youth. ——— I ſaw him no more; yet he was ſtill the deareſt object of my thoughts. After eſcaping death in many a battle, he was ſlain, as it was conjectured, by banditti, in travelling acroſs the mountains. His body was never diſcovered. Ah! little did I think it was lying ſo near me!

Ben. It is indeed piteous; and you muſt needs feel it as a brother: but conſider the danger we run, ſhould we lay violent hands on

an Imperial General, with his enraged ſoldiers, within a few hours' march of our walls.

Prior. I can think of nothing but revenge. Speak to me no more. I muſt aſſemble the whole order immediately.

[EXEUNT.

SCENE III.

Another Apartment: Enter OSTERLOO *as from a ſmall Receſs at the bottom of the Stage, pacing backwards and forwards ſeveral times in an agitated Manner; then advancing ſlowly to the front, where he ſtands muſing and muttering to himſelf for ſome Moments, before he ſpeaks aloud.*

Oſt. That this ſmothered horror ſhould burſt upon me at laſt! And there be really ſuch things as the darkened fancy imageth to itſelf, when the buſy day is ſtilled. — An unſeen world ſurrounds us: ſpirits and powers, and the inviſible dead hover near us; while we in unconſcious ſecurity — Oh! I have ſlept upon a fearful brink! Every ſword that threatened my head in battle, had power in its edge to ſend me to a terrible account. — I have ſlept upon a fearful brink. ———————— Am I truly awake? (*Rubbing his eyes, then graſping ſeveral parts of his body, firſt with one hand and then with the other*) Yes, yes! it is ſo! — I am keenly and terribly awake.

(*Paces rapidly up and down, and then ſtopping ſhort.*)

Can there be virtue in penances ſuffered by the body to do away offences of the ſoul? If there be — O if there be! let them runnel my body with ſtripes; and ſwaith me round in one continued girth of wounds! Any thing, that can be endured here, is mercy compared to the dreadful abiding of what may be hereafter.

(*Enter* WOVELREID, *behind followed by* Soldiers, *who range themſelves at the bottom of the ſtage.* Oſterloo *turning round, runs up to him eagerly.*)

Ha! my dear Albert, returned to me again, with all my noble fellows at thy back! ——— ———Pardon me; I miſtook you for one of my Captains.

Wov. I am the Prior's Captain.

Oſt. And thoſe men too?

Wov. They are the Prior's Soldiers, who have been ordered from diſtant quarters to repair to the monaſtery immediately.

Oſt. In ſuch haſte?

Wov. Aye, in truth! We received our orders after ſun-ſet, and have marched two good leagues ſince.

Oſt. What may this mean?

Wov. Faith I know not. My duty is to obey the Prior, and pray to our good ſaint; and whether I am commanded to ſurpriſe the

ſtrong hold of an enemy, or protect an execution, it is the ſame thing to me.

Oſt. An execution! can ought of this nature be intended?

Wov. You turn pale, Sir: wearing the garb of a ſoldier, you have ſurely ſeen blood ere now.

Oſt. I have ſeen too much blood.

(*Enter* Prior, JEROME, PAUL, *and* Monks, *walking in order; the* Prior *holding a paper in his hand.*)

Prior. (*with ſolemnity*) Count Oſterloo, Lieutenant-General of our liege Lord the Emperor; authorized by this deed, which is ſubſcribed by all the brethren of our Holy Order here preſent, I pronounce to you our ſolemn deciſion, that the crime of murder, as, by the myſterious voice of heaven, and your own confeſſion, your crime is proved to be, can only be expiated by death: you are therefore warned to prepare yourſelf to die this night. Before day-break, you muſt be with the inhabitants of another world; where may the great Maker of us all deal with you in mercy!

(Oſterloo *ſtaggers back from the ſpot where he ſtood, and remains ſilent.*)

Prior. It is a ſentence, Count, pronounced againſt you from neceſſity, to ſave the lives of our whole community, which you yourſelf have promiſed to ſubmit to; have you any thing to ſay in reply to it?

Oft. Nothing: my thoughts are gone from me in the darkneſs of aſtoniſhment.

Prior. We are compelled to be thus haſty and ſevere: ere day-break, you muſt die.

Oft. Ere day-break! not even the light of another ſun, to one ſo ill prepared for the awful and tremendous ſtate into which you would thruſt him! this is inhuman! it is horrible!

Prior. He was as ill prepared for it, who, with ſtill ſhorter warning, was thruſt into that awful ſtate in the narrow paſs of St. Gothard.

Oft. The guilt of murder was not on his ſoul. ——————— Nay, nay, holy Prior! conſider this horrible extremity: let the pain of the executioner's ſtroke be twenty fold upon me; but thruſt me not forth to that ſtate from which my ſoul recoils with unutterable horror. ——— ——————— Never but once, to ſave the life of a friend, did I bend the knee to mortal man in humble ſupplication. I am a Soldier; in many battles I have bled for the ſervice of my country: I am a noble Soldier, and I was a proud one; yet do I thus —— Contemn not my extremity! my knee is on the ground.

Prior. Urge me no further. It muſt not be; no reſpite can be granted.

Oft. (*ſtarting up furiouſly from the ground, and drawing his ſword*)

Then ſubdue as you may, ſtern Prieſt, the ſtrength of a deſperate man.

(Wovelreid *and* Soldiers *ruſh forward, get-*

ting behind him, and ſurrounding him on every ſide, and after a violent ſtruggle diſarm him.)

Wov. What a noble fellow this would be to defend a narrow breach, though he ſhrinks with ſuch abhorrence from a ſcaffold. It is a piteous thing to ſee him ſo beſet.

Prior. (*to* Wovelreid) What ſayeſt thou, Fool!

Wov. Nay it is no buſineſs of mine, my Lord, I confeſs. Shall we conduct him to the priſon chamber?

Prior. Do ſo; and ſee that he retain no concealed arms about him.

Wov. I obey, my Lord: every thing ſhall be made ſecure.

(Exit Oſterloo, *guarded by* Wovelreid *and* Soldiers, *and, at the ſame time, enter* Benedict, *by the oppoſite ſide, who ſtands looking after him piteouſly.*)

Prior. (*ſternly to* Benedict) What brings thee here? Doſt thou repent having refuſed to concur with us in an act that preſerves the community?

Ben. Say rather, reverend Father, an act that revenges your brother's death, which the laws of the empire ſhould revenge.

Prior. A ſupernatural viſitation of heaven hath commanded us to puniſh it. —————— What; doſt thou ſhake thy head? Thou art of a doubting and dangerous ſpirit; and beware leſt, ſooner or later, the tempter do not lure thee into hereſy. If reaſon cannot ſubdue

thee, authority ſhall. —————— Return again to thy cell; let me hear of this no more.

Ben. I will, reverend Father. But for the love of our holy ſaint, bethink you, ere it be too late, that though we may be ſaved from the peſtilence by this bloody ſacrifice, what will reſcue our throats from the ſwords of Oſterloo's ſoldiers, when they ſhall return, as they have threatened, to demand from us their General?

Prior. Give thyſelf no concern about this. My own bands are already called in, and a meſſenger has been diſpatched to the Abbeſs Matilda; her troops, in defence of the church, will face the beſt ſoldiers of the empire. —— But why loſe we time in unprofitable contentions? Go, my Sons, (*ſpeaking to other* Monks) the night advances faſt, and we have much to do ere morning.

(*Knocking heard without.*)

Ha! who knocks at this untimely hour? Can the ſoldiers be indeed returned upon us? — Run to the gate; but open it to none.

(EXEUNT *ſeveral* Monks *in haſte, and preſently re-enter with a lay-brother.*)

Lay-B. Pleaſe ye, reverend Father; the Marchioneſs has ſent a meſſenger from the caſtle, beſeeching you to ſend a Confeſſor immediately to confeſs one of her women, who was taken ill yeſterday, and is now at the point of death.

Prior. I'm glad it is only this. —
What is the matter with the penitent?

Lay-B. I know not, pleaſe you: the meſſenger only ſaid, ſhe was taken ill yeſterday.

Prior. (*ſhaking his head*) Aye, this malady has got there alſo. — I cannot ſend one of the Brothers to bring infection immediately amongſt us. ———————— What is to be done? Leonora is a moſt noble Lady; and the family have been great benefactors to our order. — I muſt ſend ſomebody to her. But he muſt ſtop well his noſtrils with ſpicery, and leave his upper garment behind him, when he quits the infected apartment. Jerome, wilt thou go? Thou art the favorite Confeſſor with all the women at the caſtle.

Jer. Nay, Father; I muſt attend on our priſoner here, who has moſt need of ghoſtly aſſiſtance.

Prior. (*to another* Monk) Go thou, Anſelmo; thou haſt given comfort to many a dying penitent.

Monk. I thank you, Father, for the preference; but Paul is the beſt of us all for adminiſtering comfort to the dying; and there is a ſickneſs come over my heart, o'the ſudden, that makes me unfit for the office.

Prior. (*to* Paul) Thou wilt go then, my good Son.

Paul. I beſeech you, don't ſend me, reverend Father; I ne'er eſcaped contagion in my life, where malady or fever were to be had.

Prior. Who will go then?

(*A deep ſilence.*)

Ben. What; has no one faith enough in the protection of St. Maurice, even purchaſed, as it is about to be, by the ſhedding of human blood, to venture upon this dangerous duty? I will go then, Father, though I am ſometimes of a doubting ſpirit.

Prior. Go, and St. Maurice protect thee!

[Exit Ben.

Let him go; it is well that we get rid of him for the night, ſhould they happily detain him ſo long at the caſtle. — He is a troubleſome, cloſe-ſearching, ſelf-willed fellow. He hath no zeal for the order. Were a miſer to bequeath his poſſeſſions to our monaſtery, he would aſſiſt the diſappointed heir himſelf to find out a flaw in the deed. — But retire to your cells, my Sons; and employ yourſelves in prayer and devotion, till the great bell warn you to attend the execution.

[Exeunt.

SCENE III.

An Apartment in the Caſtle; Enter Leonora *and* Agnes, *ſpeaking as they enter.*

Ag. But ſhe is aſleep now; and is ſo much and ſo ſuddenly better, that the Confeſſor, when he comes, will be diſſatisfied, I fear, that we have called him from his cell at ſuch an unreaſonable hour.

Leo. Let him come, nevertheleſs; don't ſend to prevent him.

Ag. He will be unwilling to be detained, for they are engaged in no common matters to-night at the monaſtery. Count Oſterloo, as I told you before, is doing voluntary penance at the ſhrine of St. Maurice to ſtop the progreſs of this terrible malady.

Leo. I remember thou did'ſt.

Ag. Ah, Marchioneſs! you would not ſay ſo thus faintly, had you ſeen him march through the paſs with his ſoldiers. He is the braveſt and moſt graceful man, though ſomewhat advanced in years, that I ever beheld. — Ah, had you but ſeen him!

Leo. I have ſeen him, Agnes.

Ag. And I ſpoke of him all the while, yet you did not tell me this before! Ah, my noble Miſtreſs and Friend! the complexion of your cheek is altered; you have indeed ſeen him, and you have not ſeen him with indifference.

Leo. Think as thou wilt about this. He was the friend and fellow-ſoldier of my Lord, when we firſt married; though before my marriage I had never ſeen him.

Ag. Friend! Your Lord was then in the decline of life; there muſt have been great diſparity in their friendſhip.

Leo. They were friends, however; for the Marquis liked ſociety younger than himſelf; and I, who had been hurried into an unequal marriage, before I could judge for myſelf, was ſometimes fooliſh enough to compare them together.

Ag. Aye, that was natural enough. (*Eagerly*) And what happened then?

Leo. (*offended*) What happened then! (*drawing herſelf up proudly.*) Nothing happened then, but ſubduing the fooliſh fancy of a girl, which was afterwards amply repaid by the ſelf-approbation and dignity of a woman.

Ag. Pardon me, Madam; I ought to have ſuppoſed all this. But you have been long a widow, and Oſterloo is ſtill unmarried; what prevented you when free.

Leo. I was ignorant what the real ſtate of his ſentiments had been in regard to me. But had this been otherwiſe; received, as I was, into the family of my Lord, the undowried daughter of a petty nobleman; and left as I now am, by his confiding love, the ſole guardian of his children and their fortunes; I could never think of ſupporting a ſecond lord on the wealth entruſted to me by the firſt, to the injury of his children. As nothing, therefore, has ever happened in conſequence of this weakneſs of my youth, nothing ever ſhall.

Ag. This is noble.

Leo. It is right. ——— But here comes the father Confeſſor.

Enter BENEDICT.

You are welcome, good Father! yet I am almoſt aſhamed to ſee you; for our ſick perſon has become ſuddenly well again, and is now in a deep ſleep. I fear I ſhall appear to you capricious

and inconſiderate in calling you up at ſo late an hour.

Ben. Be not uneaſy, Lady, upon this account: I am glad to have an occaſion for being abſent from the monaſtery for ſome hours, if you will permit me to remain here ſo long.

Leo. What mean you, Father Benedict? Your countenance is ſolemn and ſorrowful: what is going on at the monaſtery? (*He ſhakes his head.*) Ha! will they be ſevere with him in a voluntary penance, ſubmitted to for the good of the order? — What is the nature of the penance? It is to continue, I am told, but one night.

Ben. It will, indeed, ſoon be over.

Leo. And will he be gone on the morrow?

Ben. His ſpirit will, but his body remains with us for ever.

Leo. (*uttering a ſhriek*) Death, doſt thou mean? — O horror! horror! Is this the expiation? Oh moſt horrible, moſt unjuſt!

Ben. Indeed I conſider it as ſuch. Though guilty, by his own confeſſion, of murder, committed, many year's ſince, under the frenzy of paſſion; it belongs not to us to inflict the puniſhment of death upon a guilty ſoul, taken ſo ſuddenly and unprepared for its doom.

Leo. Murder! didſt thou ſay murder? Oh Oſterloo, Oſterloo! haſt thou been ſo barbarous? and art thou in this terrible ſtate? — Muſt thou thus end thy days, and ſo near me too!

Ben. You ſeem greatly moved, noble Leo-

nora: would you could do ſomething more for him than lament.

Leo. (*catching hold of him eagerly*) Can I do any thing? Speak, Father: O tell me how! I will do any thing and every thing. —— Alas, alas! my vaſſals are but few, and cannot be aſſembled immediately.

Ben. Force were uſeleſs. Your vaſſals, if they were aſſembled, would not be perſuaded to attack the ſacred walls of a monaſtery.

Leo. I did indeed rave fooliſhly: but what elſe can be done? — Take theſe jewels and every thing of value in the caſtle, if they will bribe thoſe who guard him, to let him eſcape.— Think of it. — O think well of it, good Benedict!

Ag. I have heard that there is a ſecret paſſage, leading from the priſon-chamber of the monaſtery under its walls, and opening to the free country at the bottom of the rocks.

Ben. By every holy ſaint, ſo there is! and the moſt ſordid of our brothers is entruſted with the key of it. But who will be his conductor? None but a Monk of the Order may paſs the ſoldiers who guard him; and the Monk who ſhould do it, muſt fly from his country for ever, and break his ſacred vows. I can oppoſe the weak fears and injuſtice of my brethren, for misfortunes and diſguſt of the world, not ſuperſtitious veneration for monaſtic ſanctity, has covered my head with a cowl; but this I cannot do.

Ag. There is the dreſs of a Monk of your Order in the old wardrobe of the caſtle, if ſome perſon were diſguiſed in it.

Leo. Thanks to thee! thanks to thee, my happy Agnes! I will be that perſon. — I will put on the diſguiſe. ———————— Good Father! your face gives conſent to this.

Ben. If there be time; but I left them preparing for the execution.

Leo. There is, there is! — Come with me to the wardrobe, and we'll ſet out for the monaſtery forthwith. — Come, come! a few moments will carry us there.

(Exit, *haſtily, followed by* Ag. *and* Ben.)

SCENE IV.

A wood near the Caſtle; the Stage quite dark: Enter Two Servants *with Torches.*

1ſt Ser. This muſt ſurely be the entry to the path, where my Lady ordered us to wait for thoſe ſame Monks.

2d Ser. Yes; I know it well, for yonder is the poſtern. It is the neareſt path to the monaſtery, but narrow and difficult. The night is cold: I hope they will not keep us long waiting.

1ſt Ser. I heard the ſound of travellers coming up the eaſtern avenue, and they may linger belike; for Monks are marvellouſly fond of great people and of ſtrangers; at leaſt the good Fathers of our monaſtery are.

2d Ser. Aye, in their late Prior's time they lived like lords themſelves; and they are not very humble at preſent. — But there's light from the poſtern: here they come.

(*Enter* BENEDICT, LEONORA *diſguiſed like a* Monk, *and* AGNES *with a Peaſant's cloak thrown over her.*)

Leo. (*ſpeaking as ſhe enters*) It is well thought of, good Benedict. Go thou before me to gain brother Baldwin, in the firſt place; and I'll wait without on the ſpot we have agreed upon, until I hear the ſignal.

Ben. Thou comprehendeſt me compleatly, Brother; ſo God ſpeed us both!

(*To* 1*ſt* Ser.)

Torch-man, go thou with me. This is the right path, I truſt?

1ſt Ser. Fear not, Father; I know it well.

(EXIT Ben. *and* 1*ſt* Ser.)

Leo. (*to* Agnes, *while ſhe waves her hand to* 2*d* Servant *to retire to a greater diſtance.*) After I am admitted to the monaſtery, fail not to wait for me at the mouth of the ſecret paſſage.

Ag. Fear not: Benedict has deſcribed it ſo minutely, I cannot fail to diſcover it.

Leo. What ſteps are thoſe behind us? Somebody following us from the caſtle?

Enter 3*d* Servant *in haſte.*

3d Ser. There are travellers arrived at the gate, and deſire to be admitted for the night.

Leo. In an evil hour they come. Return, dear Agnes, and receive them. Benighted ſtrangers, no doubt. Excuſe my abſence any how: go quickly.

Ag. And leave you to proceed alone?

Leo. Care not for me: there is an energy within me now, that bids defiance to fear.

(*Beckons to 2d* Servant *who goes out before her with the torch, and* EXIT.)

Ag. (*muttering to herſelf, as ſhe turns to the caſtle*) The evil ſpirit hath brought travellers to us at this moment: but I'll ſend them to their chambers right quickly, and join her at the ſecret paſſage, notwithſtanding.

[EXEUNT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Priſon-chamber of the Monaſtery*: OSTERLOO *is diſcovered, ſitting in a bending Poſture, with his clenched Hands preſſed upon his Knees and his Eyes fixed on the Ground,* JEROME *ſtanding by him.*

Jer. NAY, ſink not thus, my Son; the mercy of Heaven is infinite. Let other thoughts enter thy ſoul: let penitence and devotion ſubdue it.

Oſt. Nothing but one ſhort moment of diviſion between this ſtate of humanity and that which is to follow! The executioner lets fall his axe, and the dark veil is rent; the gulf is uncovered; the regions of anguiſh are before me.

Jer. My Son, my Son! this muſt not be; thine imagination overpowers thy devotion.

Oſt. The dead are there; and what welcome ſhall the murderer receive from that aſſembled hoſt? Oh the terrible form that ſtalks forth to meet me! the ſtretching out of that hand! the greeting of that horrible ſmile! And it is thou, who muſt lead me before the tremendous majeſty of my offended Maker! Incomprehenſible and dreadful! What thoughts can give an image of that which overpowers all thought!

(*Claſping his hands tightly over his head, and bending himſelf almoſt to the ground.*)

Jer. (*after a pauſe*) Art thou entranced? art thou aſleep? art thou ſtill in thoſe inward agonies of imagination? (*Touching him ſoftly*) Speak to me.

Oſt. (*ſtarting up*) Are they come for me? They ſhall not yet: I'll ſtrangle the firſt man that lays hold of me. (*Graſping* Jerome *by the throat.*)

Jer. Let go your hold, my Lord; I did but touch you gently to rouſe you from your ſtupor.

(Oſterloo *lets go his hold, and* Jerome *ſhrinks to a diſtance.*)

Oſt. I have graſped thee, then, too roughly. But ſhrink not from me thus. Strong men have fallen by my arm, but a child might contend with me now.

(*Throwing himſelf back again into his chair, and burſting into tears.*)

Jer. Forgive me, my Son, there was a wildneſs in your eyes that made me afraid.

Oſt. Thou need'ſt not be afraid: thou art a good man, and haſt days of life ſtill before thee; thou need'ſt not be afraid. ——————— But, as thou art a good man, ſpeak to me, I conjure thee, as a man, not as a Monk: anſwer me as the true ſenſe and reaſon of a man doth convince thee.

Jer. I will, my Son.

Oſt. Doſt thou in truth believe, that the very inſtant after life has left the body, we are forthwith awake and conſcious in the world of ſpirits? No intermediate ſtate of ſlumbering inſenſibility between?

Jer. It is indeed my belief. Death is but a ſhort though awful paſs; as it were a winking of the eyes for a moment. We ſhut them in this world and open them in the next: and there we open them with ſuch increaſed vividneſs of exiſtence, that this life, in compariſon, will appear but as a ſtate of ſlumber and of dreams. ——— But wherefore doſt thou croſs thine arms ſo cloſely on thy breaſt, and coil thyſelf together ſo wretchedly? What is the matter, my Son? Art thou in bodily anguiſh?

Oſt. The chilly night ſhoots icy coldneſs through me.

Jer. O regard not the poor feelings of a fleſhly frame, which thou ſo ſoon muſt part withal: a little time will now put an end to every thing that nature can endure.

Oſt. (*raiſing his head quickly*)
Ha! how ſoon? Has the bell ſtruck again ſince I liſtened to it laſt?

Jer. No; but it will ſoon ſtrike, and day-break is at hand. Rouſe ye then, and occupy the few minutes that remain in acts of devotion becoming thine unhappy ſtate. O, my Son, pour out thy ſoul in penitent prayers to an offended but merciful God. We, too, will pray for thee. Months, nay years after thy death, maſſes ſhall be ſaid for the repoſe of thy ſoul, that it may at laſt be received into bliſs. O my unhappy Son! pour forth thy ſpirit to God; and let thy prayers alſo aſcend to our bleſſed Saint and Martyr, who will intercede for thee.

Oft. I cannot: I have not thoughts for prayer. — The gulf yawns before me — the unknown, the unbounded, the unfathomable! — Prayers! prayers! what prayers hath deſpair?

Jer. Hold, hold, refractory Spirit! This obſtinacy is deſtruction. ———— I muſt call in brother Bernard to aſſiſt me: I cannot be anſwerable alone, in a ſervice of ſuch infinite moment.

(EXIT; *and after a pauſe, in which* Oſterloo *ſeems abſorbed in the ſtupor of deſpair, enter* LEONORA *diſguiſed.*)

Leo. (*coming eagerly forward, and then ſtopping ſhort to look at him*)
There is ſome miſtake in this: it is not Oſterloo. ———— It is, it is! but Oh, how changed! Thy hand, great God! has been upon him.

(*Going cloſer to him*)
Oſterloo; Oſterloo.

Oft. I hear thee, Father.

Leo. (*throwing aſide her diſguiſe*)
O no! it is no Father. Lift up thine eyes and ſee an old friend before thee, with deliverance in her hand.

(*Holding out a key.*)

Oft. (*looking up wildly*) Is it a ſound in my ears, or did any one ſay deliverance?

(*Gazing on her*)
What thing art thou? A form of magic or deluſion?

Leo. Neither, Count Oſterloo; but an old friend, bringing this key in her hand for thy deliverance. Yet much I fear thou haſt not ſtrength enough to riſe and follow me.

Oſt. (*bounding from his ſeat*) I have ſtrength for any thing if there be deliverance in it. — Where go we? They will be upon us immediately.

Leo. (*lifting a ſmall lamp from a table, and holding it to examine the oppoſite wall*) The door, as he deſcribed it, is to the right of a ſmall projection of the wall. — Here — here it is! (*Opens a ſmall door, and beckons* Oſterloo *to follow her.*)

Oſt. Yes, bleſſed being! I will follow thee. — Ha! they are coming!

(*Strides haſtily to the door, while* Leonora *holds up the lamp to light him in to it, and then going in herſelf, ſhuts the door ſoftly behind her.*)

SCENE II.

An old ruinous Vault, with a ſtrong grated Door on one Side, through which the Moon-beams are gleaming: on the other Side, an old winding Staircaſe, leading from the upper Regions of the Monaſtery, from which a feeble Light is ſeen, increaſing by degrees; and preſently Leonora *appears, deſcending the Stairs with a Lamp in her Hand, followed by* Osterloo.

As ſhe enters, ſomething on the Wall catches her Robe, and ſhe turns round to diſentangle it, bending her Face cloſe to the Light.

Oſt. (*ſtopping to aſſiſt her, and then gazing on her*)
Thou art ſomething I have known and loved ſomewhere, though it has paſſed away from my mind with all my better thoughts. ——— Great power of Heaven! art thou Leonora?

Leo. (*ſmiling*) Doſt thou know me now?

Oſt. I do, I do! My heart knew thee before, but my memory did not.

(*Kneeling and kiſſing both her hands*)
And ſo it is to thee—thou whom I firſt loved—Pardon me, pardon me!—thou whom I loved and dared not love;—thou from whom I fled to be virtuous—thou art my deliverer. Oh! had I never loved another after thee, it had been well. ——— Knoweſt thou it is a murderer thou art ſaving?

Leo. Say no more of this: I know thy ſtory, and I came ——

Oſt. O! thou cameſt like a bleſſed Spirit to deliver me from many horrors. I was terribly beſet: thou haſt ſnatched me from a tremendous brink.

Leo. I hope ſo, if this key prove to be the right one.

Oſt. (*alarmed*) Doſt thou doubt it?

Leo. It ſeems to me ſmaller than it ought to be, when I conſider that maſſive door.

Oſt. Give it me.

(*Snatches the key from her, and runs to the door; then turns the key in the lock, and finding it too ſmall, ſtamps with his feet, throws it from him, and holds up his clenched hands in deſpair.*)

Leo. Oh, croſs fate! But I'll return again for the right one. Baldwin cannot be ſo wicked as to deceive me, and Benedict is ſtill on the watch, near the door of the priſon-chamber. Stay here till I return.

(*She aſcends the ſtairs, whilſt* Oſterloo *leans his back to the wall, frequently moving his body up and down with impatient agitation: a bell tolls;* Oſterloo *ſtarts from his place, and* Leonora *deſcends again, re-entering in great alarm.*)

Leo. Oh! I cannot go now: that bell tolls to warn them to the great hall: I ſhall meet them on their way. What is to be done? The ſtrength of three men could not force that heavy door, and thou art feeble and ſpent.

Oſt. (*running furiouſly to the door*)
Deſpair has ſtrength for any thing.

(*Seizes hold of the door, and, making two or three terrible efforts, burſts it open with a loud jar.*)

Leo. Supernatural ſtrength has aſſiſted thee: now thou art free.

(*As* Oſterloo *and* Leonora *are about to paſs on through the door,* Wovelreid *and three*

armed Soldiers *appear in the porch beyond it, and oppoſe their paſſage.*)

Wov. Hold! we are the Prior's Soldiers, and will ſuffer no priſoner to eſcape.

Oſt. Thoſe who dare prevent me!

(*Wreſts a ſword from one of the* Soldiers, *and, fighting furiouſly, forces his way paſt them all, they not daring to purſue him; when* Wovelreid *ſeizing on* Leonora *to prevent her from following him, ſhe calls out.*)

Leo. O let me paſs! and I'll reward you nobly.

Oſt. (*returning to reſcue* Leo.)
Let go thine unhallowed graſp.

Leo. For Heaven's ſake care not for me! Save thyſelf — ſave thyſelf! I am in no danger. Turn not again to fight, when ſuch terrible odds are againſt thee.

Oſt. I have arms in my hand now, and my foes are before me! (*Fights fiercely again, till* Morand, *with a ſtrong band of* Soldiers, *entering the porch behind him, he is overpowered and ſecured*; Leonora *ſinks down by the wall in a ſwoon.*)

Wov. Give me a rope. We muſt bind him ſecurely; for the Devil has put the ſtrength of ten men into him, though, but half an hour ago, his face was as pale as a moon-light icicle, and he could ſcarcely walk without being ſupported.

Mor. Alas, alas! his face has returned to its former colour; his head ſinks on his breaſt, and his limbs are again feeble and liſtleſs. I would rather ſee him fighting like a fiend than ſee him thus.

Wov. Let us move him hence; would'ſt thou ſtop to lament over him?

Mor. It was baſe work in Baldwin to betray their plot to the Prior, for he took their money firſt I'll be ſworn.

Wov. He had betrayed the Prior then, and all the community beſides.

Mor. Well, let us move him hence: this is no buſineſs of ours.

[EXEUNT Morand, Wovclreid *and* Soldiers, *leading out* Oſterloo.

(*Enter* AGNES *by the grated door, and diſcovers* LEONORA *on the ground.*)

Ag. O holy Virgin! On the ground, fainting and ill! Have the barbarians left her thus? (*Chafing her temples and hand*) She begins to revive. It is me, my deareſt Lady: look up and ſee me: thoſe men are all gone.

Leo. And Oſterloo with them?

Ag. Alas, he is.

Leo. It is fated ſo. Let me lie where I am: I cannot move yet, my good Agnes.

Ag. Nay, do not yet deſpair of ſaving the Count.

Leo. (*ſtarting up and catching hold of her eagerly*)
How ſo? Is it poſſible?

Ag. The travellers, arrived at the caſtle, are the Imperial Ambaſſador and his train. Night overtook them on the mountains, and they are now making merry in the hall.

Leo. Thank Heaven for this! Providence has ſent him hither. I'll go to him inſtantly, and conjure him to interpoſe his authority to ſave the life of Oſterloo. Repreſenting his liege Lord, the Emperor, the Prior dare not diſobey his commands, and the gates of the monaſtery will be opened at his call. Who comes here? Let us go.

Re-enter MORAND.

Mor. (*to* Leonora) You are revived again: I am glad to ſee it. Pardon me, Lady, that I forgot you in your extremity, and let me conduct you ſafely to the caſtle.

Leo. I thank you; but my ſervants are without. Let me go. Don't follow me, I pray you.

Mor. Let me ſupport you through the porch, and I'll leave you to their care, ſince you deſire it. [EXEUNT, Leonora *ſupported by* Morand *and* Agnes.

SCENE III.

A grand Hall, prepared for the Execution; Soldiers *are diſcovered drawn up on each Side of the Scaffold, with* Benedict *and ſeveral of the* Monks *on the front of the Stage. A bell tolls at meaſured Intervals, with a deep pauſe between; after which enter* Morand, *hanging his Head ſorrowfully.*)

Ben. (*to* Mor.) Is he come forth?

1ſt Monk. Haſt thou ſeen him?

Mor. They are leading him hither, but they move ſlowly.

1ſt Monk. Thou haſt ſeen him then; how does he look now?

Mor. I cannot tell thee. Theſe few hours have done on him the work of many years: he ſeems broken and haggarded with age, and his quenched eyes are fixed in their ſockets, like one who walks in ſleep.

Ben. Alas, alas! how changed in little time the bold and gallant Oſterloo!

1ſt Monk. Have I not told thee, Morand, that fear will ſometimes couch under the brazen helmet as well as the woollen cowl?

Mor. Fear, doſt thou call it! Set him this moment in the field of battle, with death threatening him from a hundred points at once, and he would brave it moſt valiantly.

Ben. (*preventing 1ſt* Monk *from anſwering*) Huſh, Brother! Be not ſo warm, good Lieu-

tenant; we believe what thou ſayeſt moſt perfectly. The braveſt mind is capable of fear, though it fears no mortal man. A brave man fears not man; and an innocent and brave man united, fears nothing.

Mor. Aye, now you ſpeak reaſon: call it fear then if you will. — But the Prior comes; let us go to our places.

(*They arrange themſelves; and then enter the* Prior, *with a train of* Monks, *who likewiſe arrange themſelves: a pauſe, in which the bell tolls as before, and enter* Osterloo, *ſupported by* Jerome *and* Paul, Wovelreid, *and* Soldiers following.)

Prior. (*meeting him with ſolemnity*) Count Oſterloo; in obedience to the will of Heaven, for our own preſervation, and the juſt puniſhment of guilt, I am compelled with the Monks of this monaſtery over whom I preſide, to ſee duly executed within the time preſcribed, this diſmal act of retribution. — You have, I truſt, with the help of theſe holy men, as well as a few ſhort moments would allow, cloſed your mortal account with Heaven: if there be aught that reſts upon your mind, regarding worldly concerns which you leave behind you unſettled, let me know your laſt will, and it ſhall be obeyed.

(*To* Jerome, *after pauſing for an anſwer*) Doſt thou think he underſtands me?

Jer. (*to* Oſterloo) Did you hear, my Son, what the Prior has been ſaying to you?

Oſt. I heard words through a multitude of ſounds.

Jer. It was the Prior, deſiring to know if you have any wiſhes to fulfil, regarding worldly affairs, left behind you unſettled. — Perhaps to your ſoldiers you may.

Oſt. (*interrupting him eagerly and looking wildly round*) My ſoldiers! are they here?

Jer. Ah, no! they are not here; they are houſed for the night in their diſtant quarters: they will not be here till the ſetting of to-morrow's ſun.

Oſt. (*groaning deeply*) To-morrow's ſun!

Jer. Is there any wiſh you would have conveyed to them? Are there any of your officers to whom you would ſend a meſſage or token of remembrance?

Oſt. Ye ſpeak again imperfectly, through many ringing ſounds.

(Jer. *repeats the queſtion in a ſlow diſtinct voice.*)

Oſt. Aye there is: theſe, theſe ———

(*Endeavouring to tear off his cincture and ſome military ornaments from his dreſs*)

I cannot hit upon theſe faſtenings.

Jer. We'll aſſiſt you, my Son.

(*Undoing his cincture or girdle, &c.*)

Oſt. (*ſtill endeavouring to do it himſelf*) My ſword too, and my daggers. —— My laſt remembrance to them both.

Jer. To whom, my Lord?

Oſt. Both — all of them.

Ben. (*who has kept ſorrowfully at ſome diſtance, now approaching eagerly*)
Urge him no more: his officers will themſelves know what names he would have uttered.
(*Turning to* Oſt. *with an altered voice*)
Yes, noble Count; they ſhall be given as you deſire with your farewell affection to all your brave followers.

Oſt. I thank ye.

Jer. And this is all?

Oſt. Nay, nay!

Ben. What is there beſides?

Prior. (*angrily*) There is too much of this: and ſome ſudden reſcue may prevent us.

Ben. Nay, reverend Father, there is no fear of this: you would not cut ſhort the laſt words of a dying man?

Prior. And muſt I be guided by thy admonitions? Beware; though Baldwin has not named thee, I know it is thou who art the traitor.

Ben. There is but one object at preſent to be thought of, and with your leave, reverend Father, I will not be detered from it. (*To* Oſt. *again in a voice of tenderneſs*) What is there beſides, noble Oſterloo, that you would wiſh us to do?

Oſt. There is ſomething.

Ben. What is it, my Lord?

Oſt. I wot not.

Ben. Then let it reſt.

Oft. Nay, nay! This — this ——

(*Pulling a ring from his finger which falls on the ground.*)

My hands will hold nothing.

Ben. I have found it; and what ſhall I do with it?

Oft. (*in a faint hurried voice*) Leonora — Leonora.

Ben. I underſtand you, my Lord.

Prior. I am under the neceſſity, Count Oſterloo, of ſaying, your time is run to its utmoſt limit: let us call upon you now for your laſt exertion of nature. Theſe good brothers muſt conduct you to the ſcaffold. (Jer. *and* Paul *ſupport him towards the ſcaffold, while* Benedict *retires to a diſtance, and turns his back to it.*)

Jer. Reſt upon me, my Son, you have but a few paces to go.

Oft. The ground ſinks under me; my feet tread upon nothing.

Jer. We are now at the foot of the ſcaffold, and there are two ſteps to mount: lean upon us more firmly.

Oft. (*ſtumbling*) It is dark; I cannot ſee.

Jer. Alas, my Son! there is a blaze of torches round you.

(*After they are on the ſcaffold*)

Now, in token of thy faith in heaven, and forgiveneſs of all men, raiſe up thy claſped hands.

(*Seeing* Oft. *make a feeble effort, he raiſes them for him in a poſture of devotion*)

And now to heaven's mercy we commit thee.

(Jerome *and* Paul *retire, and two* Executioners *prepare him for the block, and aſſiſt him to kneel. He then lays down his head, and they hold his hands while a third* Executioner *ſtands with the raiſed axe.*)

1*ſt Ex.* (*ſpeaking cloſe into his ear*) Preſs my hand when you are ready for the ſtroke.

(*A long pauſe.*)

He gives no ſign.

2*d Ex.* Stop, he will immediately.

(*A ſecond pauſe.*)

Does he not?

1*ſt Ex.* No.

Prior. Then give the ſtroke without it.

(3*d Ex. prepares to give the ſtroke, when the* Imperial Ambaſſador *ruſhes into the hall, followed by* Leonora *and* Agnes, *and a numerous train.*)

Am. Stop the execution! In the name of your liege Lord the Emperor, I command you to ſtop upon your peril. My Lord Prior, this is a treacherous and clandeſtine uſe of your ſeignorial power. This noble ſervant of our Imperial Maſter (*pointing to* Oſterloo) I take under my protection; and you muſt firſt deprive an Imperial Ambaſſador of life, ere one hair of his head fall to the ground.

Ben. (*running to the ſcaffold*) Up, noble Oſterloo! Raiſe up thy head: thou art reſcued: thou art free.

Leo. Riſe, noble Oſterloo! doſt thou not know the voice that calls thee?

Ben. He moves not; he is in a ſwoon.

(*Raiſes* Oſterloo *from the block whilſt* Leonora *bends over him with anxious tenderneſs.*)

Leo. He is ghaſtly pale: yet it ſurely can be but a ſwoon. Chafe his hands, good Benedict, while I bathe his temples.

(*After trying to reſtore him*)
Oh, no, no! no change takes place. What thinkeſt thou of it? Is there any life here?

Ben. In truth I know not: this ſeems to me the fixed ghaſtly viſage of compleat death.

Leo. On, no, no! he will be reſtored. No ſtroke has fallen upon him: it cannot be death. Ha! is not that ſomething? Did not his lips move?

Ben. No, Lady; you but deceive yourſelf: they moved not: they are cloſed for ever.

Leo. (*wringing her hands*) Oh it is ſo! it is ſo!—after all thy ſtruggles and exertions of deſpair, this is thy miſerable end! — Alas, alas! thou who didſt bear thy creſt ſo proudly in many a well-fought field; this is thy miſerable end!

(*Turning away, and hiding her face in the boſom of* Agnes.)

Ambaſſ. (*examining the body more cloſely*)
I think in very truth he is dead.

1ſt Gentleman of his Train. Yes; the face

never looks thus, till every ſpark of life is extinguiſhed.

Ambaſſ. (*turning fiercely to the* Prior) How is this, Prior? What ſorcery has been here, that your block alone ſhould deſtroy its victim, when the ſtroke of the axe has been wanting? What account ſhall I carry to my maſter of the death of his gallant General?

Prior. No ſorcery hath been practiſed on the deceaſed: his own mind has dealt with him alone, and produced the effects you behold. And, when you return to Lewis of Bavaria your Maſter; tell him that his noble General, free from perſonal injury of any kind, died, within the walls of this monaſtery, of fear.

Ambaſſ. Nay, nay, my good Prior; put the fool's cap on thine own head, and tell him this tale thyſelf. ——————— Fear! Oſterloo and fear coupled together! when the lion and the fawn are found couching in the ſame lair, we will believe this.

Prior. All the Brothers of the Order will atteſt it.

Ambaſſ. Away with the teſtimony of your cowled witneſſes!

(*Beckoning* Morand *to come near*) Morand, thou art a brave fellow; I have known thee of old. Thou art the Prior's officer indeed; but thou art now under my protection, and ſhalt be received into the Emperor's ſervice with encreaſed rank: Speak the truth then, boldly; how died Count Oſterloo?

Mor. In very truth then, my Lord, according to my ſimple thoughts, he died even as the Prior has told you.

Ambaſſ. Out upon thy hireling's tongue! art thou not aſhamed, thyſelf wearing a Soldier's garb, to blaſt a Soldier's fame? There is no earthly thing the brave Oſterloo was ever known to fear.

Mor. You ſay true, my Lord; and on my ſword's point I'll maintain it againſt any man as ſtoutly as yourſelf. But here is a pious Monk (*pointing to* Jerome) who will explain to you what I ſhould ſpeak of but lamely.

Jer. With the Prior's permiſſion, my Lord, if you will retire with me a little while, I'll inform you of this myſterious event, even ſimply as it happened. And perhaps you will then confeſs, that, called upon ſuddenly, under circumſtances impreſſing powerfully the imagination, to put off this mortal frame, and ſtand forth in that tremendous preſence, before which this globe, with all its mighty empires, hangs but as a criſped rain-drop, ſhivering on the threaded goſſamer; the braveſt mind may, if a guilty one, feel that within which is too powerful for human nature to ſuſtain.

Ambaſſ. Explain it as thou wilt; I ſhall liſten to thee: but think not to cheat our Imperial Maſter of his revenge for the loſs of his gallant General. I ſhall not fail, my Lord Prior, to report to him the meek ſpirit of your chriſtian authority, which has made the general weal of

the community ſubſervient to your private revenge; and another month, I truſt, ſhall not paſs over our heads, till a worthier man (*pointing to* Benedict) ſhall poſſeſs this power which you have ſo greatly abuſed. ———————— Let the body be removed, and laid in ſolemn ſtate, till it be delivered into the hands of thoſe brave troops, who ſhall inter it with the honours of a Soldier.

THE END.

THE SIEGE:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

Count VALDEMERE.
Baron BAURCHEL.
WALTER BAURCHEL, *his Brother.*
ANTONIA, *Baron de Bertrand.*
DARTZ, *his Friend.*
Page *to* Count Valdemere.
LORIMORE, *his Valet.*
HOVELBERG, *a Jewel or Diamond Merchant.*
Soldiers, Servants, &c.

WOMEN.

Countefs VALDEMERE, *Mother to the Count.*
LIVIA.
JEANETTA, *Woman to the Countefs.*
NINA.
Ladies, &c.

Scene, *a Caſtle on the French confines of Germany.*

THE SIEGE.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — *A Grove near the Caſtle, with Part of the embattled Walls ſeen through the Trees: Enter* Baron BAURCHEL *and* WALTER BAURCHEL, *ſpeaking as they enter.*

Bar. HAVE done, Brother; I can bear it no longer. Hadſt thou been bred in a cave of Kamſchatka, inſtead of a manſion of civilized Europe, this ſavage plainneſs had been endurable: but ——

Walt. I call a turnip a turnip, indeed, when other people ſay it is a peach or a nectarine; I call a pig a pig too, though they ſwear it is a fawn or an antelope; and they look at me, I confeſs, ſomewhat ſuſpiciouſly, as if they expected to ſee a tail peeping from under my jerkin, or fur upon my hands like a bear. — You would have me civilized, would you? It is too late in the day now, good ſooth!

Bar. Yes, the time is indeed gone by. This bachelor's life has brutified thee paſt all redemption. Why did you not marry Brother?

Walt. Nay, you who have met with ſo many goddeſſes and creatures of perfection in the world, why did not you marry, Brother? I who could light upon nothing better than women — mere women; every one of them too with ſome fault or failing belonging to her, as obvious as thoſe white hairs that now look from under your peruke, was it any marvel that I did not marry?

Bar. Had your wife poſſeſſed as many faults as you do wrinkles on your forehead, you would have been the better for her; ſhe would have ſaved thee, as I ſaid before, from brutification.

Walt. And your's would have ſaved you from dupification, dotification, and as many 'fications beſides, as an old ſentimental, hypocritical, greedy Dulcinea, can faſten on a rhyme-writing beau, who is ſtepping moſt unwillingly, with his lace-cloaked hoſe, over that ungracious line of diviſion, that marks out his grand climacteric.

Bar. Hypocritical! greedy! you don't know the delicacy of her mind: nothing can be more tender, more refined, more diſintereſted than her attachment to me. You don't underſtand her.

Walt. Perhaps, I don't underſtand the attachments of the fair ſex now-a-days. An old rich neighbour of mine informed me the other night, that he is going to marry his poor friend Spendall's youngeſt daughter, who has actually fallen in love with him; and nothing, as he tells me, almoſt in your own words, can be more tender,

more diſintereſted than her attachment. Not underſtanding theſe matters, Brother, I'll freely confeſs to you I did not give much credit to his ſtory; but I may be wrong nevertheleſs. I dare ſay you believe it entirely.

Bar. Ridiculous! What proofs can the fool poſſibly receive of her attachment?

Walt. The very ſame which the Counteſs ſo condeſcendingly vouchſafes to yourſelf; ſhe accepts of his preſents.

Bar. The very ſame! No, no, Walter Baurchel; very different! Does not every ſmile of her countenance, every look of her eyes, involuntarily expreſs her partiality for me?

Walt. Say, rather, every word of her tongue.

Bar. With what generous enthuſiaſm did ſhe not praiſe my ſonnet to Senſibility.

Walt. Aye, ſhe is generous in what coſts her little; for what are two or three lies, more or leſs, in the week's confeſſion between her and Father Benedict? She'll ſcarcely eat a mouthful of partridge the leſs for it.

Bar. O heartleſs infidel! Thou would'ſt miſtruſt the fond ſmiles of a mother careſſing her roſy-faced infant.

Walt. By my faith, ſo I would, Baron, if that ſame infant brought a diamond necklace or a gold ſnuff-box in his hand for every kiſs ſhe beſtowed upon him. Every ſonnet you write coſts you, one with another, a hundred louis d'ors. If all the money vanity filches from rich poets could be transferred to the pockets of poor ones, verſe-

making would be as good a buſineſs as ſhoe-making, or any other handicraft in the country.

Bar. Hold thy unhallowed tongue! Theſe ſubjects are not for thy rude handling. What is all this grumbling intended for? Tell me what you want, and have done with it; you who pique yourſelf ſo much on your plain ſpeaking.

Walt. Well, then; I want you to let the next ſix ſonnets you write go unpraiſed, and give the money that ſhould have paid for the praiſing of them, ſix hundred louis d'ors, as I reckon, to Antonia. Is it not a ſhame that your own ward and heir, in love with the Lady of this caſtle, as you very well know, cannot urge his ſuit with advantage, for want of the equipage and appendages becoming his rank; while this conceited Count, by means of his diſintereſted mother, drains your purſe ſo freely; and is thereby enabled to ruin the pretenſions of him whom you ought to ſupport?

Bar. His pretenſions are abſurd, and cannot be ſupported.

Walt. Why abſurd? Is he not as brave, as well born, as handſome, too, as his rival?

Bar. What ſignify all his good qualities? In the preſence of his miſtreſs he is an idiot.

Walt. It is true, he loſes all poſſeſſion of himſelf in that ſituation, and therefore ſhe deſpiſes him, while the gay confidence of the other delights her: but he ſhould be ſupported and encouraged.

Bar. How encouraged? Silly fellow!

Walt. He feels too ſenſibly his diſadvantages, and they depreſs him. He feels that he is not entitled to pretend to Livia, but as the probable heir of your eſtates; while your fantaſtical fondneſs for this woman and her ſon, makes it a doubtful matter whether you may not be tempted ——— But huſh! here ſhe comes with her new-ruddled face, bearing her morning's potation of flattery with her, for a ſtomach of moſt wonderful digeſtion.

(*Enter Counteſs* VALDEMERE, *who, after ſlightly noticing* WALTER, *runs up careſſingly to the* Baron.)

Counteſs. How do you do, my dear Baron? I hope you have paſſed the night in ſweet repoſe. — Yet, why do I hope it? You ſcarcely deſerve that I ſhould.

Bar. And why ſo, Belinda?

Walt. (*aſide, making a lip at them*) Belinda, too! Sweet innocents!

Bar. Why ſhould you not hope that I have paſſed the night in repoſe?

Counteſs. Becauſe I am vindictive, and would be revenged upon you for making me paſs a very ſleepleſs one.

Walt. (*aſide*) Will ſhe make love to him before one's very face.

Bar. Then I am a culprit indeed, but an innocent one. What kept you awake?

Counteſs. O, thoſe verſes of yours! thoſe dear

provoking verſes! they haunted me the whole night. (Baron *bows.*) But don't think I am going to talk to you of their beauties — thoſe tender eaſy graces which they poſſeſs, in common with every thing that comes from your pen: I am going to tell you of their defects. You know well my friendſhip for you, my dear Baron, makes me ſometimes ſevere.

Bar. (*aſide to* Walt.) There now, you Churl, do you call this flattery? (*Aloud*) My dear Counteſs, your ſeverity is kindneſs.

Counteſs. Receive it then, as ſuch; for indeed I muſt be very ſevere on the two laſt lines of the ſecond ſtanza, which have diſturbed me exceedingly. In the verſes of an ordinary poet I ſhould not find fault with them; but in a work, where every thing beſides is eaſy, harmonious and correct, the ſlighteſt defect is conſpicuous; and I muſt poſitively inſiſt on your altering them, though you ſhould hate me for being ſo faſtidious.

Bar. (*aſide to* Walt.) There now, ungracious Canker-tongue, do you call this hypocriſy? (*Aloud*) Madam, I kiſs the rod in ſo fair and ſo friendly a hand. Nay, it is a ſceptre, to which I bow with devotion.

Counteſs. (*to* Walt.) You ſee, good Sir, I take great liberties with the Baron, as, I doubt not, with the privilege of a brother, you yourſelf ſometimes do.

Walt. Yes, Madam, but my way of finding

fault with him is ſomewhat different from yours.

Counteſs. Yet you ſtill find his generous ſpirit, I am ſure, ſubmiſſive to the rod.

Walt. I can't ſay I do, Madam.

Counteſs. You are unfortunate enough, perhaps, to uſe it unſkilfully.

Walt. I am fortunate at preſent, however, in receiving ſo good a leſſon from you, Madam.

Counteſs. O no! there is no ſkill with me. There are perſons to whom one cannot ſay one-half of what one really thinks, without being deemed a flatterer.

Walt. In this, however, I have been more fortunate than you, Madam; for I have ſaid to him what I have really thought for theſe forty years paſt, and have entirely eſcaped that imputation.

Bar. Aye, flattery is a ſin thou wilt never do penance for. Thou can'ſt rub the ſide of a galled jade with any tender-hearted innocent in Chriſtendom, and be mighty ſurpriſed withal that the poor devil ſhould be ſo unreaſonable as to winch at it.

Counteſs. Nay, nay, Baron! ſay not this of ſo good a brother, the ſhrewdneſs and penetration of whoſe mind are tempered, I am ſure, with many amiable qualities.

Walt. Nay, pray, Madam, ſpare me, and deal with but one of us at a time. Such words will intoxicate a poor younger brother like myſelf, who is ſcarcely able to get a fowl for his pot, or

new facings for his doublet, and cannot therefore be ſuppoſed to be accuſtomed to them.

Counteſs. Sir, I underſtand not your inſinuation.

Bar. Regard him not, Madam: how ſhould a mind, noble and delicate as your own, comprehend the unworthy thoughts of contemptible meanneſs? — Let me conduct you to company more deſerving of you. Our fair Hoſteſs, I ſuppoſe, is already in her grotto.

Counteſs. No, ſhe and my ſon are to follow me. But you muſt not go to the grotto with me now: no body is to ſee it till the evening.

Bar. (*offering to lead her out*) A ſtep or two only.

Counteſs. O, not a ſtep for the world!

[Exit, Baron *kiſſing her hand as ſhe goes off.*

Bar. (*turning fiercely upon* Walt.) Thy unmannerly meanneſs is intolerable. Still hinting at the preſents ſhe receives. Greedy as thou call'ſt her, ſhe never aſked a gift from me in her life, excepting my picture in miniature, which could only be valuable to her as ſhe prized the original.

Walt. Say rather, as her jeweller ſhall prize the goodly brilliants that ſurround it.

Bar. What do you mean?

Walt. What I ſhould have told you before, if ſhe had not interrupted us; that her trinket-broker is this very morning coming ſecretly, by appointment, to the caſtle, to treat with her

for certain things of great value which ſhe wiſhes to diſpoſe of; and if your picture be not amongſt them, I'll forfeit my head upon it.

Bar. It is falſe.

Walt. Here comes one who will confirm what I ſay.

Enter DARTZ.

Walt. I'm glad to ſee you, Chevalier, for you can bear evidence to a ſtory of mine that will not be believed elſe.

Dart. This is a better reaſon for being ſo than moſt of my friends have to give.

Walt. Is not Hovelberg, the jeweller, coming ſecretly to the caſtle to-day to confer with the Counteſs?

Dart. Yes, he told me ſo himſelf; and added, with a ſignificant ſmile, that ſhe had ſome of her old ware to diſpoſe of.

Walt. Do you hear that, Brother? It was as much as to ſay, ſhe had often had ſuch truckings with him before. Aye; you are not the only man who has thought his own dear reſemblance lapped warmly behind the ſtomacher of his miſtreſs, while, ſtripped of its jewels, it has been toſſed into the drawer of ſome picture-monger, to be changed into a General of the laſt century, or one of the Grand-dukes of Auſtria. As for you, Brother, they'll put a black velvet cap on your head, and make you a good ſombre doctor of theology.

Bar. You ſhall not, however, make me the credulous man you think of, Walter Baurchel, with all your contrivances.

Walt. And you don't believe us then?

Bar. Are you fool enough to imagine I do?

Walt. That were fooliſh enough, I grant you; for though an old lover has generally a ſtrong vein of credulity about him, the current of his belief always ſets one way; carrying withered noſegays, tattered billet-doux, broken poſies, and all kinds of trumpery along with it at fifteen knots by the hour.

Bar. Walter Baurchel! Walter Baurchel! fleſh and blood cannot endure the offenſive virulence of thy tongue.

Dart. He is indeed too ſevere with you, Baron; but what he tells you of Hovelberg is, nevertheleſs, very true.

Bar. I'll believe neither of you: you are both hatching a ſtory to deceive me.

[Exit *in anger.*

Walt. (*ſhrugging his ſhoulders and caſting up his eyes*) What ſtrong deluſion we poor mortals may be blinded withal! That poor brother of mine believes, that the woman who refuſed to marry him when he was young and poor, yet ſmiles upon him, praiſes him, accepts preſents from him when he is old and rich, muſt certainly entertain for him a moſt delicate, diſintereſted attachment; and you might as well overturn the walls of that caſtle with

one ſtroke of your foot as beat this abſurdity out of him.

Dart. But you are too violent: it will not be beat out; it muſt be got out as it got in, with craft and diſcretion.

Walt. Then devil take me for attempting it! for craft I have none, and diſcretion is a thing ———

Dart. You will never have any thing to do with, I believe.

Walt. What then is to be done? If it were not that I cannot brook to ſee the conceited overbearing ſon of this Jezebel, carrying off the miſtreſs of Antonia, I would even let the old fool ſit under the tickling of her thieviſh fingers, and make as great a noodle of himſelf as he pleaſes. — But it muſt not be. — Fie upon it, Dartz! thou haſt a good head for invention, while I, heaven help me! have only a good tongue for railing; do thou contrive ſome plot or other to prevent the diſgrace of thy friend.

Dart. Plots are not eaſily contrived.

Walt. I know this, elſe I ſhould have tried it myſelf.

Dart. Are you well acquainted with the Count?

Walt. I am but juſt come to the caſtle, where I have thruſt myſelf in, though an unwelcome gueſt, to look after the intereſt of De Bertrand; and ſhould be glad to know ſomething more of the man who has ſo much intoxicated the gay Livia. What kind of a being is he?

Dart. It would puzzle me as much as the contriving of your plot to anſwer that queſtion. There is nothing real in him. He is a mere package of pretences, poorly held together with ſenſe and capacity enough, were it not for one defect in his nature, to make him all that he affects to be. He is a thing made up of ſeemings.

Walt. Made up of ſeemings!

Dart. Even ſo; for what in other men is reckoned the ſincereſt part of their character, his very ſelf-conceit, is aſſumed.

Walt. And what is the defect you hinted at?

Dart. It has been whiſpered to me by an old ſchool-fellow of his, that he is deplorably deficient in perſonal courage; which accounts for his mother's having placed him in the regiment of a ſuperannuated General, and alſo, for the many complaints he makes of the inactivity of his commander. It is a whiſper I am inclined to credit; and, if we muſt have a plot, it ſhall hinge upon this.

Walt. My dear fellow! nothing can be better. Give it a turn or two in thy brains, and I'll warrant thou draweſt it out again, ſhaped into an admirable plot. Direct all thyſelf, and I'll work under thee as a journey-man conſpirator; for, as I ſaid before, I have a ready tongue, but a head of no invention.

Dart. We muſt ſpeak of this another time. See who approaches.

Walt. Ha! the man we are ſpeaking of, and

the deluded Livia. By my faith he has a ſpecious appearance! and the young fool looks at him too, as ſhe would not look at a worthier man, whoſe merit might be tarniſhed with a few grains of modeſty.

(*Enter* VALDEMERE *and* LIVIA, *followed by* JEANETTE *carrying a baſket filled with flowers, &c.*

Dart. (*to* Liv.) Permit me, Madam, to pay you my profound homage.

Liv. You are welcome here, Chevalier: what accident procures me this pleaſure? (*Aſide to* Count) He'll make one more at our midnight revel in the grotto.

Vald. (*Aſide with ſome chagrin*) Are there not enow of us?

Dart. Being in this part of the country on military duty, I could not reſiſt the pleaſure of paying my reſpects at the caſtle: and I honeſtly confeſs I had a ſecondary motive for my viſit, expecting to find amongſt your gueſts, my old friend and ſchool-fellow Antonia.

Liv. Baron de Bertrand, you mean. He was here yeſterday, but I really forget whether he went away or remained in the evening. (*Affecting to yawn*) Is he with us, or not Count?

Walt. (*aſide to* Dart.) Meet me by-and-by in my chamber. My tongue is unruly, and I had better go while I can keep it between my teeth.

[EXIT.

Liv. Does not his amiable relation there, who ſteals from us ſo quietly, know where he is?

Vald. If you are in queſt of your friend, Chevalier, had you not better enquire at ſome of the peaſants' houſes in the neighbourhood? There may be ſome beauty in the village, perhaps, whoſe auguſt preſence a timid man may venture to approach, particularly if her charms ſhould be ſomewhat concealed behind the friendly flax of her diſtaff.

Dart. Pardon me, Count; I thought my friend had aſpired to a beauty, whoſe charms would have pleaſed him, indeed, behind the flax of a diſtaff, but will not, I truſt entirely intimidate him from the more brilliant ſituation in which fortune has placed them. Aye; that glance in your eye, and that colour in your cheek, charming Livia, tell me, I am right.

Liv. They ſpeak at random then; for it would puzzle a much wiſer head than I wear on my ſhoulders to ſay what are his pretenſions. He viſits me, it is true, but ſuddenly takes his leave again, and the very next day, perhaps, as ſuddenly returns.

Vald. Like poor puſs with roaſted cheſnuts before her, who draws back her burnt paw every time ſhe attempts them, but will not give up the attack. He may, however, after ſome more of thoſe haſty viſits, find courage for it at laſt.

Dart. There is one attack, however, for

which he never lacks courage; when the enemies of his country are before him.

Vald. True; he is brave in the field, but he is fortunate alſo. He ſerves under an active Commander, while I waſte my ardour in liſtleſs inactivity.

Dart. Cheer up then, noble Count, I have good news to tell you upon this ſcore.

Vald. On this ſcore! Is any change to take place? (*In a feeble voice.*)

Dart. (*after a pauſe*) You are too well bred to be impatient for an anſwer.

Vald. O no! You miſtake me; I am very impatient; I am on fire to hear it.

Dart. Expand then your doughty breaſt at thoughts of the glorious fields that are before you: your old General is ſet aſide, and the moſt enterpriſing man in the ſervice, Count ——— himſelf is now your Commander. (*After a momentary pauſe, and eyeing him keenly*) Silent joy, they ſay, is moſt ſincere; you are, I perceive, conſiderately and profoundly glad.

Vald. (*aſſuming ſuddenly great animation*) O immeaſurably ſo. Great news indeed!— Strange — I mean very admirable news, if one could be ſure it were true.

Dart. True! Who doubts, what delights him?

Vald. I thought the regiment was promiſed to another perſon; I was not prepared to hear it.

Dart. So it appeared.

Vald. But I am delighted — I can't expreſs it: — I'm glad to a folly. Tol de rol — tol de rol —

(*Singing and ſkipping about affectedly.*)

Liv. Cruel creature! to ſing at what, perhaps, will make others weep.

Vald. Weep! — No I don't weep. I am happy to a folly, but I don't weep. (*Skipping about again.*) Tol lol de rol! — plague take theſe ſtones! this ground is abominably rough.

Dart. Fie upon it! any ground is ſmooth enough for a happy man to ſkip upon.

Liv. You ſmile, Dartz; your news is of your own invention.

Dart. Not abſolutely, Madam; there was ſuch a rumour.

Vald. (*eagerly*) A rumour! only a rumour! Why did you ſay it was true?

Dart. To give you a moment's pleaſure, Valdemere. If you have enjoyed it, you are a gainer; and the diſappointment, I hope, will not break your heart.

Vald. It is cruel indeed. But who can feel diſappointment in this fair preſence. (*Bowing to* Liv.) Let us go to the grotto, charming Livia; we waſte our time here with folly. — Give me thy baſket, child, (*to* Jean.) I'll diſpoſe of every chaplet it contains to admiration. I'll hang them all up with mine own hand.

Liv. Don't be ſo very active: you poſitively ſhan't follow me to the grotto: I told you ſo before.

Vald. Poſitive is a word of no poſitive meaning when it enforces what we diſlike. However, ſince you forbid it, I will not *follow* you; I'll go by your ſide, which is far better, and ſupport your fair hand on my arm. (*Putting* Livia's *arm in his with conceited confidence.*)

Liv. What a ſophiſtical explanation of my words! a heretical theologian is a joke to you.

Vald. (*Caſting a triumphant look behind him to* Dartz, *as he leads her off*) Good morning, Chevalier, you go in queſt of your friend, I ſuppoſe. Pray tell him to take courage, and be leſs diffident of his own good parts, and he may at laſt be promoted, perhaps, to the good graces of his Quarter-Maſter's daughter.

Dart. No body at leaſt, who ſees Count Valdemere in his preſent ſituation, will think of recommending modeſty to him.

[EXEUNT Vald. *and* Liv. *followed by* Jean.)

Dart. Impudent puppy! his triumph ſhall be ſhort. Blind woman! are flattery and impudence ſo neceſſary in gaining your favour, that all other qualities, without them, are annihilated? He ſhall this very night pay dearly for his preſumption. [EXIT.

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *A room in the Caſtle; enter* WALTER BAURCHEL *and* DARTZ, *by oppoſite Sides.*

Walt. HA, my good Friend! punctual to a wiſh! You have got your head ſtored I hope with a good plot.

Dart. I am at leaſt more in the humour for it than I was. I have found his conceit and arrogance more intolerable than I imagined. I have touched him in the weak part too, and find him vulnerable.

Walt. Well, but the plot.

Dart. I have diſcovered alſo a trait of villainy in him, that would prick me on to the charge were I ſluggiſh as a tortoiſe.

Walt. So much the better. Now for the plot.

Dart. As I paſſed juſt now through the little green copſe near the poſtern, a beautiful girl croſſed my way, and in tears.

Walt. Tut! ſhe has croſſed thy wits too.

Dart. Have patience; ſhe'll be uſeful. — I queſtioned her gently.

Walt. Aye; gently enough I doubt not.

Dart. And find ſhe is ſiſter to that ſhrewd little fellow the Count's page: that her affections have been gained and betrayed by Valdemere; and ſhe is now hovering about the caſtle,

for an opportunity of upbraiding him, or in the vain hope, perhaps, of moving his pity.

Walt. She has moved thy pity at leaſt; what has all this to do with our plot?

Dart. A great deal: I am telling you before hand what we ſhall have to work upon: a plot cannot, any more than a coat, be made without materials.

Walt. Well, but ſhew me thy pattern firſt, and talk of the buttons and buckram afterwards.

Dart. Be it ſo then, ſince you are ſo impatient. There is a friend of mine ſtationed about a league hence with his regiment; where he is to wait till he is joined by another detachment of the army, as the enemy, it is feared, may penetrate to theſe parts, and overrun the country. I mean to go to him immediately; make him privy to our deſign, and engage him to ſend a party of his ſoldiers to make a ſham attack upon the caſtle at midnight, when we ſhall all be aſſembled at this fanciful banquet in the grotto.

Walt. (*nodding his head*) Good.

Dart. Valdemere then, as the gallant ſoldier he affects to be, and the favoured admirer too of the lady, muſt of courſe take upon himſelf the defence of her caſtle.

Walt. (*nodding again*) Very good.

Dart. This will quell his preſumption, I truſt; and expoſe him to Livia for the very paltry being that he is.

Walt. Aye, ſo far good; you'll make ſome furtherance to the plot out of this.

Dvrt. Some furtherance to the plot! Why this is the plot itſelf.

Walt. The plot itſelf! Any ſimple man in the country might have deviſed as much as this comes to.

Dart. It does not pleaſe you then becauſe it is not intricate. But don't deſpiſe it entirely; though the outline is ſimple, tricks and contrivances to work up the mind of our victim to the ſtate that is ſuited to our purpoſe, will enrich it as we proceed; and the Page I have mentioned, provoked by the wrongs of his ſiſter, will be our ſubtle and diligent agent. Nay, ſhould we draw Valdemere into great diſgrace, we may bribe him, by concealing his diſhonour, to marry the poor girl he has wronged.

Walt. Ha! this indeed is ſomething like a plot. — And Antonio's marriage with Livia, how is that to be faſtened to the end of it?

Dart. Nay, I have no certain hook, I confeſs, to hang that upon. It muſt depend on the Baron; for unleſs he declare Antonio his heir, he will never venture to propoſe himſelf as a match for the well-dowried Livia. But we ſhall manage matters ill, if we cannot draw the Baron into our ſcheme.

Walt. Then a fig for your plot! It is as bare of invention as the palm of my hand.

Dart. This is always the caſe with thoſe who lack invention themſelves: they are never

pleaſed with that of any other perſon, if it be not briſtled over with contrivances like a hedge-hog. And I muſt be allowed to ſay, Mr. Walter Baurchel, that he who racks his brains for your ſervice, works for a thankleſs maſter.

Walt. He works for an honeſt one, then.

Dart. Away with the honeſty that cannot afford a few civil words to a friend, who is doing his beſt to oblige you! As much duplicity as this amounts to, would not much contaminate your virtue.

Walt. Well, well, I am wrong, perhaps, but thou art as teſty as myſelf.

Dart. Becauſe I won't bear your untoward humour. Some people find every body teſty who approaches them, and marvel at their own bad luck. — But no more of this: let us think of our friend. Does the Baron believe what you told him of Hovelberg's appointment with the Counteſs?

Walt. He makes a ſhew of not believing it, but I think he has his own ſuſpicions at bottom; for his valet tells me, he has ſent to deſire Hovelberg to ſpeak with him as ſoon as he arrives.

Dart. Here comes De Bertrand; I hear his ſteps.

Walt. Is he returned to the caſtle?

Dart. Yes; I forgot to tell you ſo, you were in ſuch a hurry for your plot.

Walt. Silly fellow! he cannot ſtay away from his capricious miſtreſs, though the firſt glance of her eye ſinks him to a poltron at once.

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. (*to* Walt.) Good morning, gentle Kinſman; — but methinks you are not very glad to ſee me; theſe are not looks of welcome.

Walt. Thou art one of thoſe that trouble me.

Ant. I am of a pretty numerous claſs of beings then, from the kitten that gnaws at your ſhoeſtring, to the Baron, who ſpoils your beſt pen in writing love-verſes to his miſtreſs.

Walt. Well; and they would torment any man. Love-verſes! with ſuch an old painted hypocrite for the object of them!

Ant. His firſt love, you know; his Delia.

Walt. His Delia! His deluſion. Is there ſuch a thing as witchcraft in the world? I believe in good earneſt there is. Her dominion over him is a myſtery; a more than Egyptian blindneſs.

Ant. Nay, you have yourſelf in a good degree to blame for it, my good Sir. Had you encouraged his humour, harmleſs as it is; beſtowing ſome praiſe on his verſes, and leſs abuſe on the too youthful cut of his peruke, ſhe could never have taken poſſeſſion of him as ſhe has done.

Walt. Praiſe his verſes, and not abuſe his peruke! it had been beyond the ſelf-denial of a ſaint.

Dart. And had you ——

Walt. (*to* Dart.) One aſſailant at a time, if you pleaſe.

Dart. Excuſe me, Sir; I muſt needs ſay, had you even paid a little attention to the Counteſs herſelf, when ſhe firſt renewed her intimacy with the Baron, ſhe would have been leſs anxious, perhaps, to eſtrange him from his old friends.

Walt. Attention to her! I could not have done it to gain myſelf, like Mahomet, the entrance to the ſeventh heaven. I muſt tell people plainly what I think of them, though I ſhould hang for it.

Dart. Had you ſaid ſtarve for it, you had named the fate that more commonly attends plain ſpeaking.

Ant. And in telling people diſagreeable truths to gratify your own humour too, are you ſurpriſed, my good Sir, that they ſhould not be edified thereby?

Walt. (*to* Ant.) What, young Soldier, you are become a plain ſpeaker too.

Ant. Juſt to ſhew you, Sir, how agreeable it is.

Walt. Ha, ha, ha! Well; thou haſt the better of me now. Would thou could'ſt prate as briſkly to thy miſtreſs! that would do more for thee in one hour than all thy baſhful tenderneſs in a year.

Ant. I might —— I ſhould indeed —— I defend not my weakneſs. — You promiſed on this point to ſpare me.

Walt. Aye, the very ſound of her name quells

thy ſpirit, and makes thee heſitate and ſtammer like a culprit. It is provoking.

Dart. You profeſs a violent deteſtation of conceit, my ſhrewd Sir; where, then, is your indulgence for modeſty?

Walt. You miſtake the matter, Dartz. Your friend there, has as good a conceit of himſelf as any man: he is not modeſt but baſhful; a weakneſs too that only beſets him in the preſence of his miſtreſs. By this good fiſt of mine! it provokes me almoſt to the cudgelling of ſuch an unaccountable ninny. But I would cudgel thee, and ſerve thee too, De Bertrand. Take courage; we have a plot in our heads to make a man of thee at laſt.

Dart. (*aſide, pulling* Walt. *by the ſleeve*) Say not a word of the plot: his ſenſe of honour is ſo delicate, he would recoil at it.

Ant. A plot did you ſay?

Walt. Aye, a kind of a plot; — that is to ſay —— What kind of a plot is it Dartz?

Dart. Have you forgot your own ſcheme for cheating the virtuoſo, when your cabinet of antiquities comes to the hammer?

Walt. By my fay! this memory of mine is not worth a pinch of tobacco. (*Seeing* Ant. *look at his watch*) Art thou going any where?

Ant. No; — I did think —— I believe I ſhall take a turn on the terrace.

Dart. (*to* Ant.) I underſtand you: take a turn in the cabinet of paintings rather; that will ſuit your purpoſe better.

Ant. May I preſume to go there?

Walt. Preſume, Simpleton! That impudent puppy of a Count lords it in her dreſſing-room. Go thy ways! (*puſhing him off the ſtage with ſlight anger:* Exit Antonio.) That fellow provokes me; yet there is ſomething in him that goes ſo near my heart: he is more akin to me than his blood entitles him to be: he is like a part of myſelf.

Dart. Not the leaſt like it. Now that you have taught us to ſpeak plainly, I muſt needs ſay, were he at all like yourſelf, you would diſinherit him in the courſe of a month.

Walt. You are right, perhaps. — But alas! he would not be much the poorer for being diſinherited by me. O that old fool of a brother! I could flog him for his poetry!

Dart. Have patience, and we may find a better way of dealing with him. If we could perſuade him to diſguiſe himſelf like a diamond merchant, and accompany Hovelberg when he viſits the Counteſs, he would be convinced of the true nature of her regard for him.

Walt. An excellent thought! This is juſt what was wanting to make our plot really like a plot.

Dart. I'm glad it pleaſes you at laſt. — Before I leave the caſtle to negociate with my friend for his myrmidons, I'll find out the Baron, and endeavour to perſuade him.

Walt. Heaven proſper thee! but return, ere thou goeſt, and let me know the reſult.

Dart. Depend upon it.

[EXEUNT *ſeverally.*

SCENE II.

A Room hung with Paintings, and otherwiſe enriched with Carving and Ornaments, &c. Enter VALDEMERE *and* ANTONIO.

Vald. Here are ſome good paintings, De Bertrand ; if you have any taſte for the art, they will pleaſe you. This Guido on the left is a divine thing. The Magdalen in Count Orrinberg's collection was conſidered as ſuperior to it ; but I always maintained this to be the beſt painting of the two, and the world have at laſt adopted my opinion. I have always decidedly thought —— But you are not looking at it. Is there any thing in that door to arreſt your attention ? The carving on it is but indifferent.

Ant. I thought I heard footſteps. She's coming.

Vald. Pooh ! ſhe won't be here this half hour ; ſo you need not yet take alarm, as if an enemy were advancing upon you.

Ant. You connect the idea of alarm with an enemy ; would I had firmneſs to face what I love ! You are a happy man, Valdemere, and a bold one too, moſt aſſuredly : what would not I give for a little of your happy ſelf-poſſeſſion.

Vald. Aye ; it is an article of ſome value : he who can't poſſeſs himſelf, muſt not expect to poſſeſs his miſtreſs.

Ant. A very ſpecious maxim this, from a young fellow's mouth with the manlineſs of well-curled whiſkers to ſupport it: yet I have ſeen the embarraſſment of a diffident character plead its own cauſe more effectually than the eloquence of a brazen-browed Barriſter. At leaſt I have always felt it have more power over me.

Vald. That is natural enough: it is a common ſelfiſh ſympathy: one thief pities another when the rope is round his neck. Feeling for others is the conſequence of our own imperfections; this is a known truth.

Ant. Eſtabliſh it if you can, Valdemere, for it will go well nigh to prove you immaculate.

Vald. How far ſoever I may be from that degree of perfection, jealouſy at leaſt is not one of my faults, ſince I have introduced a rival into the apartments of my miſtreſs, where he had not the courage to venture alone, and am alſo pointing out to him what he has not diſcovered for himſelf, that her picture is now before his eyes. (*Pointing to a picture.*)

Ant. (*looking up to it eagerly*) It is ſomewhat like.

Vald. She ſat for it at my requeſt: no one elſe could prevail on her. The painter knew my taſte in theſe matters, and has taken wonderful pains with it.

Ant. (*ſighing*) You have indeed been honoured.

Vald. He has made the eyes to look upon you with ſuch expreſſion.

Ant. Think you ſo? To me he appears to have failed in this reſpect; or perhaps it is becauſe any ſemblance of eyes which I can thus ſtedfaſtly look upon, are not to me the eyes of Livia.

Vald. I did not ſuſpect you to be ſo faſtidious.

Ant. Not ſo neither. But ſurely eyes of ſuch vivid expreſſion ſhould never be painted as looking at the ſpectator; for what pencil in the world can produce the effect he demands? They ſhould be directed to ſome other object; and then he ſees them as he has been accuſtomed to ſee them.

Enter LIVIA *behind them.*

Vald. Perhaps you are right: you talk like a connoiſſeur on the ſubject.

Liv. I come in good time then; for connoiſſeur or not, to hear De Bertrand talk at all is a very lucky adventure. You have wronged us much, Baron, to keep us ſo long ignorant of your taſte for the fine arts.

Ant. (*embarraſſed*) Madam, I am much honoured. I am very little ——(*mumbling words in a confuſed way that are not heard.*) I am very much obliged to you.

Liv. You are grateful for ſlight obligations. But you are looking at my picture, I ſee, which was painted two years ago at the requeſt of a

good old uncle of mine; pray give me your opinion of it.

Ant. It appears——it is very charming. It is——that is, I ſuppoſe, it is very finely painted.

Liv. It is reckon'd ſo: and it certainly does more than juſtice to the original. (Ant. *heſitates as if he would ſpeak but remains ſilent.*) You are of my opinion, I perceive, or at leaſt too well bred to contradict me. Confeſs it freely: you are of my opinion.

Ant. O entirely, Madam.

Liv. You flatter me exceedingly.

Ant. I meant it in ſimple ſincerity.

Liv. O, ſincere enough I doubt not.

Vald. And ſurely you will not queſtion its ſimplicity.

Liv. (*to* Vald., *turning from* Ant. *with pity and contempt*) Don't let us be too hard upon him. Pray look at that picture of my great Aunt who was a celebrated beauty.

Vald. (*gazing with affected admiration at* Livia's *picture*) I have no eyes for any other beauty than what I now gaze upon.

Liv. And do you indeed admire this picture ſo much?

Vald. The fainteſt reſemblance of its fair original is faſcinating. Yet methinks the painter has failed in the expreſſion of the eyes. But any eyes indeed that I can look thus ſtedfaſtly upon, are not to me the eyes of Livia.

Liv. Ah! theſe are in truth the words of a too partial friend.

Vald. Words from the heart, divine Livia,

will tell from whence they came. (*They both walk to the bottom of the ſtage, ſpeaking in dumb-ſhew, while* Ant. *remains in the front.*)

Ant. (*aſide*) With my own words he woos her, and before my face too. — Matchleſs impudence! — And ſuch a man as this pleaſes Livia! — He whiſpers in her ear, and ſhe ſmiles. — My heart ſickens at it. — I'll look no more, leſt I become envious and revengeful, and hateful to myſelf. — O Nature! haſt thou made me of ſuch poor ſtuff as this?

Vald. (*turning round from the bottom of the ſtage*) Ha, De Bertrand! are you declaiming? Some ſpeech of a tragedy, I ſuppoſe, from the vehemence of your geſture. Pray let Livia hear you: ſhe is partial, you know, to every thing you do, and finds every exhibition you make before her particularly amuſing.

Ant. (*ſternly*) Come nearer to me, Sir; the firſt part of my ſpeech is for your private ear. — Come nearer.

Liv. Pray go to him: by the tone of his voice he perſonates ſome tyrant, and muſt be obeyed.

Ant. Yes, Sir, I muſt be obeyed. (Vald. *ſhuffles up to him unwillingly, and* Ant. *ſpeaks in his ear.*) Take no more impertinent liberties with me in this lady's preſence, or be prepared to juſtify them elſewhere.

(Exit, *looking at* Vald. *ſternly, who remains ſilent.*)

Liv. (*advancing to the front*) What is the matter, Count?

Vald. Nothing — nothing at all.

Liv. Nay ſomething unpleaſant has paſſed between you.

Vald. I believe I did wrong: I ſhould have treated him more gently. But the ſtrangeneſs of his behaviour obliged me to uſe threatening words, upon which he withdrew, and choſe not to underſtand them.

Liv. How ill one judges then by dumb-ſhew of what paſſes at a diſtance.

Vald. I am always calm on theſe occaſions, while he aſſumes the fierceneſs of a boaſter.

Liv. But you will not call him out for ſuch a trifle.

Vald. Not for the world, divine Creature, if it give you uneaſineſs.

Liv. How gentle you are! The brave are always ſo.

Vald. How can I be otherwiſe with ſuch an angel to prompt me? No; the braggard may live in ſafety for me; I will not harm one hair of his head.

Liv. I thank you, dear Valdemere! and now to recompenſe your goodneſs, I'll ſhew the beautiful gem I promiſed you: follow me.

Vald. Yes, bewitching Maid! to the world's end, to the bottom of the ocean, to the cannon's brazen mouth, I would follow thee.

[EXEUNT.

SCENE III.

The Countefs's *dreffing Room: She enters from an inner Chamber with a fmall fhagreen Cafe in her Hand, followed by* JEANETTA, *carrying a Caflet which fhe fets upon a Table.*

Countefs. Jeanetta! let me take a laft look of thofe dear things before I part with them for ever.

Jean. I'm fure, my Lady, they are fo handfome, and you look fo handfome when you wear them, it would go to my heart to part with them.

Countefs. But my dear boy muft have money, Jeanetta, and I have been expenfive myfelf. (*Opens the caflet, and looks at the jewels.*) My diamonds, my pearls, my rubies, my darlings! for the fake of a ftill greater darling I muft part with you all.

Jean. But if I might prefume to fpeak, my Lady; don't you indulge the young Count too much in extravagance?

Countefs. O no, Jeanetta; I doat upon him: it is this amiable weaknefs of character which all the world remarks and admires in me. And he loves me entirely too; he would facrifice his life for my fake.

Jean. He'll facrifice nothing elfe, however; for he never gives up the fmalleft convenience of his own to oblige you.

Countefs. Small things are of no confequence: he would give up for me, I am confident, the

thing moſt dear to his heart: and for him — to ſee him lord of this caſtle and its domains, and occupying in ſociety the brilliant place that becomes him, I would — what would I not ſacrifice!

Jean. Were he to live on the fortune he has, and marry where he is attach'd, he might perhaps be happier.

Counteſs. Happier! Were he mean enough to be happy ſo — contemptible thought! — I would ſee him in his grave rather. — But no more of this: have you ſeen Hovelberg? You ſay he is waiting below.

Jean. Yes, Madam, and a friend with him; an Armenian Jew-merchant, who will, he ſays, go halves in his purchaſes, and enable him to give you a better price for the jewels, as he is himſelf rather low in caſh at preſent.

Counteſs. Well; I'll object to neither Jew nor Infidel that puts money into my pocket. (*Holding up a ruby necklace.*) This ſhould fetch ſomething conſiderable.

Jean. O la, Madam! you won't part with that ſurely: your neck is like alabaſter under it. Did you but know how they admired you at Prince Dormach's the laſt time you wore it. — I would ſell the very gown from my back ere I parted with it.

Counteſs. So they admired me at Prince Dormach's then?

Jean. O dear, my Lady! the Prince's valet told me, though two young beauties from

Bruſſels were there, nobody ſpoke of any one but you.

Counteſs. Well; to pleaſe thee, then, I'll keep it.

Jean. La! here is a little emerald ring, my Lady; thoſe brokers will deſpiſe ſuch a trifle, and give you a mere nothing for it. — La, who would think it! it fits my fingers to a hair. It muſt be a mort too large for your delicate hand.

Counteſs. Keep it for thyſelf then, ſince it fits thee. He was a great fool who gave it me, and had it made of that awkward ſize.

Jean. I thank you, my Lady; I wiſh you would give me every thing in this precious caſket that has not been the gift of a ſage.

Counteſs. Thou art right, Child. It would put many a hundred louis-d'ors into thy pocket, and leave ſcarcely a marverdi for myſelf. — A rich Knight of Malta gave me theſe (*holding up a ſtring of pearls*), whoſe bandy legs were trick'd out moſt delicately in fine-clocked hoſe of the niceſt and richeſt embroidery. Reſt his ſoul! I made as much of thoſe legs as the hoſier did.

Jean. I doubt it not, Madam, and deſerved what you earned full as well.

Counteſs. (*looking again at her pearls*) There is not a flaw in any one of them.

Jean. Aye; commend me to ſuch legs! had they been ſtraighter, the pearls had been worſe.

Counteſs. This amber box with briliiants I had from an old croacking Marquis, who peſtered

every muſic room in the principality to the day of his death, with notes that would have frightened a peacock. As long as he ſang, poor man! I conſidered myſelf as having a ſalary on the muſical eſtabliſhment at the rate of two hundred ducats per month.

Jean. Aye; God ſend that all the old Marquiſes in theſe parts, would croak for us at this rate.

Counteſs. I have no reaſon to complain: my preſent friend bleeds as freely as any of his predeceſſors.

Jean. So he ſhould, my Lady. Such nonſenſe as he writes ought not to be praiſed for a trifle. I would not do it, I'm ſure.

Counteſs. Doſt thou ever praiſe then for profit?

Jean. To be honeſt with you, Madam, I have done it, as who has not? But never ſince I entered your Ladyſhip's ſervice; for why ſhould you reward me for praiſing you, when all the world does it for nothing? — No, no, my Lady; you are too wiſe for that.

Counteſs. There is ſomebody at the door.

Jean. It is Hovelberg.

Counteſs. Open then, but let nobody elſe in.

(Jean. *opens the door, and* Hovelberg *enters, followed by Baron* Baurchel, *diſguiſed as an Armenian Jew.*)

Counteſs. I am happy to ſee you, dear Hovelberg; and this Gentleman alſo, (*curteſying to the* Bar.) I know it is only a friend whom we

may truſt, that you would introduce to me on the preſent occaſion.

Hov. To be ſure, Madam: a friend we may depend on. (*Drawing* Counteſs *aſide, and ſpeaking in her ear*) A man of few words: better to do in this quarter than this. (*Pointing firſt to his pocket, and then to his head.*) And that is a good man, you know, to be well with.

Counteſs. O the beſt ſtuff in the world for making a friend of. (*Returning to the* Bar.) Sir, I have the higheſt regard and eſteem for you.

Bar. (*in a feigned voice*) On vatch account, Madam?

Counteſs. O good Sir! on every account.

Baron. You lov'ſh not my religion?

Counteſs. I reſpect and reverence it profoundly.

Bar. You lov'ſh not my perſhon?

Counteſs. It is intereſting and engaging, moſt aſſuredly.

Bar. No body telſh me ſho before.

Counteſs. Becauſe the world is full of envious people, who will not tell you truths that are agreeable.

Bar. (*nodding aſſent*) Now I underſtant.

Counteſs. Yes, dear Sir; you muſt do ſo; your underſtanding is unqueſtionable. (*Looking archly to* Hovel.) And now, Gentlemen, do me the honour to be ſeated, and examine theſe jewels attentively.

Hov. We would rather ſtand if you'll permit us.

Counteſs. (*aſide to* Hovel., *while the* Baron *examines the jewels*) My dear Hovelberg, be liberal; for the ſum I want is a large one, and thoſe jewels would procure it for me any where; only, regarding you as my friend, I give you the firſt offer. — But your friend, methinks, examines every thing with great curioſity.

Hov. Yes, poor man! he likes to appear as knowing as he can: this is but natural, you know, when one is deficient in the upper department. — But he'll pay like a Prince, if you flatter and amuſe him.

Bar. Vaſht fine ſtones! Vaſht pretty ornaments! (*To* Counteſs) You diſhpoſhe of all deſhe?

Counteſs. Yes, every thing.

Bar. Dere be gifsh here, no doubt, from de dear frienſh.

Hov. Or ſome favoured lover, perhaps.

Counteſs. (*ſighing affectedly*) Perhaps ſo; but I muſt part with them all.

Bar. (*aſide to* Hov.) Nay, ſhe has ſome tenderneſs for me: put her not to too ſevere a trial.

Hov. (*aſide*) We ſhall ſee.

Bar. (*returning to* Counteſs) You be woman; and all womanſh have de affections for ſome one lover or frient.

Counteſs. O how good and amiable and conſiderate you are! I have indeed a heart formed for tenderneſs,

Bar. (*drawing* Hovel. *aſide again*) She does love me, Hovelberg: tempt her not with an extravagant price for the picture.

Hov. (*aſide*) I'll take a better way of managing it. (*Returning to the* Counteſs) My Friend deſires me to ſay, Madam, that, if there is any thing here you particularly value, he'll advance you money upon it, which you may pay at your leiſure, and you ſhall preſerve it.

Counteſs. (*to* Baron) How generous you are, my dear Sir! Yes; there is one thing I would keep.

Bar. (*eagerly*) One ting—dere be one ting: tiſh picture, perhaps.

Counteſs. This ruby necklace.

Bar. You ſell tiſh picture, den?

Counteſs. To be ſure, if you'll purchaſe it.

Hov. The diamonds are valuable, indeed; but you will not ſell the painting?

Counteſs. That will depend on the price you offer for it.

Hov. Being a portrait, it is of no value at all, but to thoſe who have a regard for the original.

Jean. And what part of the world do they live in, Mr. Hovelberg? Can you find them out any where?

Counteſs. Nay, peace, Jeanetta.—As a portrait, indeed, it is of no value to any body, but, as a characteriſtic old head, it ſhould fetch a good price. (*Shewing it to* Baron) Obſerve, my dear Sir, that air of conceit and abſurdity

over the whole figure: to thoſe who have a taſte for the whimſical and ridiculous, it would be invaluable. Don't you perceive it?

Bar. Not very ſure.

Counteſs. Not ſure! Look at it again. See how the eyes are turned languiſhingly aſide, as if he were repeating, "Dear gentle idol of a heart too fond." (*Mimicking the* Baron's *natural voice.*)

Hov. Ha, ha, ha! Your mimickry is excellent, Counteſs. Is it not, Friend Johnadab?

Bar. O, vaſht comical.

Hov. (*aſide to him*) She has a good talent.

Bar. (*aſide*) Shrewd witch! The words of my laſt ſonnet, indeed; but I did not repeat them ſo.

Hov. (*aloud*) Though you are an admirable mimick, Madam, my Friend Johnadab does not think your imitation of the Baron entirely correct.

Counteſs. (*alarmed*) He knows the Baron, then; I have been very imprudent. — But pray don't ſuppoſe I meant any diſreſpect to the worthy Baron, whom I eſteem very much.

Bar. O vaſht much!

Hov. Be not uneaſy, Madam; my Friend will be ſecret, and loves a joke mightily.

Counteſs. I'll truſt, then, to his honour: and ſince he does not like my imitation of the Baron, he ſhall have it from one who does it better than I. Jeanetta, amuſe this worthy gentleman by repeating the Baron's laſt ſonnet.

Jean. Nay, my Lady, you make me do it ſo often, I'm tired of taking him off.

Counteſs. Do as you are bid, Child.

Jean. " Dear gentle idol of a heart too fond,
" Why doth that eye of ſweeteſt ſympathy——"

Hov. Ha, ha, ha! Excellent!

Bar. (*off his guard*) By Heaven, this is too bad! Your ſervants taught to turn me into ridicule!

Counteſs. (*ſtarting*) How's this? Mercy on me!

Hov. Be not alarmed, Counteſs; I thought he would ſurpriſe you. My Friend is the beſt mimick in Europe.

Counteſs. I can ſcarcely recover my ſurpriſe. (*To* Baron) My dear Sir, I cannot praiſe you enough. You have a wonderful talent. The Baron's own mouth could not utter his voice more perfectly than yours.

Bar. (*pulling off his cap and beard*) No, Madam, not eaſily. (Jean. *ſhrieks out, and the* Counteſs *ſtands in ſtupid amazement.*) This diſguiſe, Madam, has procured for me a ſpecimen of the amiable diſpoſitions of a heart formed for tenderneſs, with a ſample of your talents for mimickry into the bargain; and ſo I wiſh you good day, with thanks for my morning's amuſement.

Counteſs. (*recovering herſelf*) Ha, ha, ha! You underſtand mumming very well, Baron, but I ſtill better. I acted my part well.

Bar. Better than well, Madam: it was the counter-part of my enacting the Baron.

Jean. Indeed, dear Baron, the Counteſs knew it was you, and ſo did I too. Indeed, indeed we did. I'm ſure it is a very good joke: I wonder we don't laugh more at it than we do.

Bar. Be quiet, ſubordinate Imp of this arch Tempter! My thraldom is at an end; and all the jewels in that ſhameful heap were not too great a price for ſuch emancipation. (*Bowing very low to* Counteſs) Adieu moſt amiable, moſt ſentimental, moſt diſintereſted of women!

[Exit.

Counteſs. Hovelberg, you have betrayed me.

Hov. How ſo, Madam? You told me yourſelf you were the moſt ſincere woman in the world; the Baron doubted your regard for him; how could I then diſſuade him from putting it to the proof, unleſs I had doubted your word, Madam? An inſult you could never have pardoned.

Counteſs. What, you laugh at me, too, you villain! (Exit Hovel.) Oh! I am ruined, derided and betrayed! (*Throws herſelf into a chair, covering her face with her hand, while* Jeanetta *endeavours to comfort her.*)

Jean. Be not ſo caſt down, my Lady, there are more than one rich fool in the world, and you have a good knack at finding them out.

Counteſs. O, that I ſhould have been ſo unguarded! That I ſhould never have ſuſpected!

Jean. Aye, with his vaſht this, and his vaſht that: it was, as he ſaid, vaſht comical that we did not.

Counteſs. Bring not his deteſted words again to my ears; I can't endure the ſound of them,

Enter VALDEMERE.

Vald. Well, Madam, you can anſwer my demands now, I hope: Hovelberg has been with you. Money, money, my dear mother! (*Holding out his hand*) There is a fair broad palm to receive it; and here (*kiſſing her hand coaxingly*) is a ſweet little hand to beſtow it.

Counteſs. (*puſhing him away ſternly*) Thy inconſiderate prodigality has been moſt diſaſtrous. Had'ſt thou been leſs thoughtleſs, leſs profuſe—a ſmall portion of prudence and economy would have made us independent of every dotard's humour.

Vald. Notable virtues indeed, Madam; but where was I to learn them pray? Did you ever before recommend them to me, by either precept or example? Prudence! Economy! What has befallen you? I'm ſure there is ſomething wrong, when ſuch words come from your lips. — Ha! in tears, too! Hovelberg has brought no money then?

Counteſs. No, no, Barbarian! He has ruined me.

Vald. How ſo?

Counteſs. I cannot tell thee: it would ſuffocate me.

Jean. La, Count! My Lady may well call him Barbarian. He brought the old Baron with him to purchaſe the jewels, diſguiſed like an Armenian Jew; and when bargaining with her for his own picture, my Lady ſaid ſomething of the original not much to his liking, and ſo the old fool tore off his diſguiſe and bounced out of the room in a great paſſion.

Vald. By my faith, this is unlucky! I depended on touching 500 louis d'ors immediately.

Counteſs. Thinking only of yourſelf ſtill, when you may well gueſs how I am diſtreſſed.—I ſhall never again find ſuch a liberal old cully as he.

Vald. Yes you will, Mother: more readily than I ſhall find the 500 louis.—I owe half that ſum to Count Pugſtoff, for loſſes at the billiard table; all the velvet and embroidery, the defunct ſuits of two paſſing years haunt me wherever I go, in the form of unmannerly taylors: and, beſides all this, there is a ſweet pretty Arabian in the ſtables of Huckſton, my jockey, that I am dying to be maſter of.—By my faith, it is very hard! Had you no ſuſpicion? How came you to be ſo much off your guard?

Counteſs. I believe it was fated to be ſo, and therefore I was blinded for the moment. I dreamt laſt night that I had but one tooth in my head, and it dropped on the ground at my feet. This, it is ſaid, betokens the loſs of a friend by death, and I trembled for thee, my Child; but

now, too ſurely, my dream is explained and accompliſhed.

Vald. And, methinks, you would have preferred the firſt interpretation.

Counteſs. Ah! ungrateful Boy! You know too well how I have doated on you.

Vald. I do know too well: it has done me little good, I fear.

Counteſs. It has done me little good, I'm ſure, ſince this is all the gratitude thou haſt. I ſhould never, but for thee, have become the flatterer of thoſe I deſpiſe, to amaſs thoſe odious jewels.

Vald. Ha! the jewels are ſtill here then! I ſhall have my louis' ſtill. Thank you, dear Mother, that you did not part with them, at leaſt. (*Kiſſing her hand haſtily, and running to the table*) I'll ſoon diſpoſe of them all.

Counteſs. (*running after him*) No, no! not ſo faſt, Valdemere: thou wilt not take them all. Haſte thee, Jeanetta, and ſave ſome of them.

(*They all ſcramble round the table for the jewels, and the ſcene cloſes.*)

ACT III.

Scene before the Gate of the Caſtle. Enter NINA, *who croſſes the Stage timidly, ſtopping once or twice, and then, with heſitation, giving a gentle knock at the Gate. Enter* Porter *from the Gate, which he opens.*

PORTER (*after waiting to hear her ſpeak*) WHAT do you want, young woman? Did you only knock for amuſement?

Nin. No, Sir; is Count Valdemere in the caſtle? I would ſpeak with him, if he is at leiſure.

Port. He is in the caſtle; but as to ſpeaking with him, no man, of leſs conſequence than his valet, can anſwer that queſtion.

Enter LORIMORE, *by the oppoſite ſide.*

Here he is. You come opportunely, Mr. Lorimore; this young perſon would ſpeak with your Maſter.

Lor. (*aſide*) O, Nina, I ſee. (*Aloud*) How do you do, my pretty Nina? You can't ſpeak with my Maſter, indeed; but you may ſpeak with the next moſt agreeable perſonage in theſe parts, my Maſter's man, as long as you pleaſe; and that, be aſſured, is a far better thing for your purpoſe, my Princeſs.

Nin. Dare you inſult me? You durſt not once have done it.—I do not aſk then to ſee him; but give him this letter.

Lor. (*taking the letter*) Do you wiſh this precious piece to be read, Child, or to be burnt?

Nin. Why aſk that? To be read, certainly.

Lor. I muſt not give it to the Count, then, but keep it to myſelf: and if you'll juſt allow me to make the ſlight alteration of putting Lorimore the valet for Valdemere the maſter, as I read, it will be a very pretty, reaſonable letter, and one that may advance your honour withal.

Nin. Audacious Coxcomb! Give it me again. (*Snatches the letter from him, and turns away.*)

Lor. She is as proud as that little devil of a Page, her brother.

(*Enter* Page *behind from the gate.*)

Page. The more devil he be, the fitter company for you. Whom ſpoke you to? (*Seeing* Nina) Oh, oh! Is Nina here!——Nina, Nina! (*Running after her.*)

Nin. (*returning*) My dear Theodore, is it thee? I did not aſk for thee, leſt thou ſhould'ſt chide me for coming to the caſtle.

Page. I won't chide, but I'm ſorry to ſee thee here. Fie, Woman! thou art the daughter of as brave an Officer, though a poor one, as any in the ſervice; art thou not aſhamed to come, thus meanly, after a lover who deſpiſes thee?

Nin. He promiſed to marry me.

Page. He promiſed a fiddle-ſtick! Poor deluded ſimpleton!

Nin. Ah, doſt thou chide me, boy as thou art?

Page. Who is there to chide thee now, when both our parents are dead? But as they would have done ſo do I, Siſter; I chide thee, and love thee too.—Go now; return to the good woman from whoſe houſe thou haſt ſtolen away, and I'll buy thee a new gown as ſoon as my quarter's ſalary is paid me.

Nin. Silly child, what care I for a new gown? But if thou haſt any pity for me, give this letter to thy maſter.

Page. I will, I will: but go thy ways now; there is a gentleman coming. And do, dear Nina, return no more to the caſtle till I ſend thee word. Good be with thee, poor Simpleton!

[Exit Nina, *and enter* Dartz *by the oppoſite ſide.*

Dart. Is it thy ſiſter thou haſt parted from? I met her in the wood this morning; ſhe need not avoid me now.

Page. Let her go, Sir; the farther ſhe is from the caſtle the better.

Dart. Thou haſt a letter in thy hand.

Page. Yes, Sir.

Dart. Which thou art to give to the Count.

Page. No, Sir; I'll ſee him choked firſt. (*Tearing the letter.*)

Dart. Nay, ſee what it contains ere thou deſtroyeſt it.

Page. (*putting it together again and reading it*) Only upbraiding his unkindneſs, and ſtuff of that ſort, with ſome nonſenſe about a dream ſhe has had, which makes her afraid ſhe ſhall never ſee him again.

Dart. Let me look. (*After reading it*) This letter may be uſeful. Come with me, my little friend; and we'll deviſe a way of revenging thy ſiſter on her cruel ſeducer.

Page. Will you? I'll worſhip you like a ſaint of the calendar if you do this.

Dart. (*conſidering*) Is not your maſter ſomewhat ſuperſtitious?

Page. Marry is he! but mightily afraid to be thought ſo. He laughed at me when the bad fever prevailed for wearing a charm on my breaſt againſt infection; but the very next night, when he went to bed, what ſhould drop out think you, as he opened his veſt, but the very ſame charm which he had procured immediately, and worn with ſuch ſecrecy, that even Valet Lorimore knew nothing of the matter.

Dart. This is good; come with me, and I'll inſtruct thee what to do with thy letter.

[Exeunt.

SCENE II.

VALDEMERE'S *Dreſſing-Room: Enter* PAGE *treading ſoftly on tiptoe, and looking about the Room.*

Page. Aye; the coaſt is clear, and the door of his chamber is a-jar; now is my time. (*Pulling the torn letter from his pocket, and ſtamping on the floor as he raiſes his voice*) There, curſed letter, I'll make an end of thee! Give thee to my maſter, indeed! I'll give thee to the devil firſt. (*Pretending to tear the letter, and ſtrew the pieces about, while* Valdemere *looking from the door of his chamber, ſteals behind him and ſeizes his hands with the remainder of the letter in them.*) Mercy on me! is it you, my Lord?

Vald. What art thou doing? What ſcares thee ſo? What letter is this? Let me ſee it.

Page. O no, my Lord, I beſeech you, for your own ſake, don't read it.

Vald. Why ſhould not I read it, Boy?

Page. Lud, I don't know! you may not mind it, perhaps; but were any body to ſend ſuch a letter to me, I ſhould be mainly terrified. To be ſure, death comes, as they ſay, at his own time, and we can't keep him away, though we ſhould hang ourſelves; but one don't like to be told before-hand the very year or day we are to die, neither.

Vald. The year and day! give me the letter: give it me immediately. (*Snatching the frag-*

ments of the letter from him, and picking up a piece or two from the floor, which he puts together haſtily on a table near the front of the ſtage.) I can't make it piece any way.

Page. So much the better, my Lord: don't try to do it.

Vald. It is Nina's hand, I ſee, but I can make no ſenſe of it. — Aye, now it will do (*reading*) "I have been terrified with a dream, and fear I ſhall ſee you no more." But where is the dream; it is torn off; give it me.

Page. I have it not.

Vald. Thou lieſt! give it me, I ſay.

Page. Lud have mercy! as I tore it off juſt now, your black ſpaniel ran away with it.

Vald. No, varlet! that is a ſham; go find it; thou knoweſt where it is well enough.

Page. Indeed, my Lord, if it is not in the black ſpaniel's cuſtody it is no where elſe that I know of.

Vald. (*reading again*) I fear I ſhall ſee you no more! But it may be her own death as well as mine, that her dream has foretold; and therefore ſhe may ſee me no more.

Page. Very true, you had better think ſo; though it does not often happen that a woman is killed at a ſiege.

Vald. At a ſiege!

Page. Peſt take this haſty tongue of mine; I could bite it off for the tricks it plays me.

Vald. At a ſiege!

Page. O, never mind it, Sir. It may be ſome

lie after all: ſome wicked invention to make you afraid.

Vald. (*ſternly*) What ſayeſt thou?

Page. O no! I don't mean afraid; only uneaſy as it were —— no no! not uneaſy neither; only ſomewhat as you feel at preſent, my Lord; you know beſt what to call it.

Vald. At a ſiege!

Page. Dear my Lord; thoſe words are glued to your tongue.

Vald. (*not heeding him*) My grandfather periſhed at a ſiege, and his grandfather alſo: is this fate decreed in our family for alternate generations? (*Sinks into a chair by the table, and* Page *ſeeing him ſo much abſorded, comes cloſe to him, ſtaring curiouſly in his face.*)

Vald. Take thy varlet's face out of my ſight; why art thou ſo near me? Leave the room, I ſay. [Exit Page.

(*Riſing, and pacing to and fro as he ſpeaks to himſelf.*)

A hundred dreams prove falſe for one that prefigures any real event. — It ſhould not have been however: my mother ſhould have found for me ſome other occupation than a military life. —— Quit it? No; I can't do that: the world would cry out upon me; Livia would deſpiſe me. — 'Tis a ſtrange thing that women, who can't fight themſelves, ſhould ſo eagerly puſh us to the work. —— Pooh! am I a fool that it ſeizes me thus? —— I would this boy, however, had really deſtroyed the letter.

(*Enter* DARTZ, *looking at* Vald. *ſome time before he ſpeaks.*)

Dart. (*aſide*) This will do; it is working with him. (*Aloud, advancing*) My dear Count; — but don't ſtart; I bring no bad tidings; I come to beg a favour of you.

Vald. (*recovering himſelf*) Say you are come to oblige me.

Dart. I thank you, Valdemere: but faith I'm aſhamed to mention it; you will laugh at me for being ſo ſuperſtitious.

Vald. Ha! ſomebody has been dreaming about you too.

Dart. Should you deem me very credulous if a thing of this nature had power to diſturb me?

Vald. 'Tis even ſo; they have been dreaming all over the houſe. Ha, ha, ha! And thou art really uneaſy about ſuch flummery as this: ha, ha, ha! ha, ha, ha! This is admirable — delightful! — ha, ha, ha, ha!

Dart. Be more moderate with your merriment: your tears and your laughter come ſo ſtrangely together, one would take you for an hyſterical girl.

Vald. I can't chuſe but laugh at your dreamers; ha, ha, ha!

Dart. Don't laugh at me then; for I'm neither a dreamer, nor believer in dreams.

Vald. (*becoming ſerious at once*) No; what is it then?

Dart. I'm almoſt aſhamed to tell you, yet I'll throw myſelf on your mercy and do it. — I am

in love then, and fearful of the fortunes of war; for you know we muſt expect ſharp fighting this enſuing campaign.

Vald. (*ruefully*) You think ſo?

Dart. I'm certain of it. Now, though I have no faith in dreams, I muſt own I have ſome in fortune-tellers; and there is a famous one juſt come to the caſtle, whom I would gladly conſult. Will you permit me to bring him to your inner apartment there; that he may tell me of my future deſtiny, whatever his art may reveal to him? Laugh as you pleaſe, but refuſe me not this favour; for there is no other room in the caſtle where I can meet him, ſecure from interruption.

Vald. (*ſmiling affectedly*) And thou art really in earneſt with this folly?

Dart. When you have heard the wonderful things this wizard has foretold, you will not call it folly.

Vald. Can'ſt thou tell me any of them?

Dart. Take a turn with me on the terrace, and thou ſhalt hear things that will aſtoniſh thee.

Vald. Ha ha! it is whimſical to ſee thee ſo ſerious. Such ſtories are pleaſant amuſement: I'll attend thee moſt willingly.

[Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — *A ſmall Room in* Valdemere's *Apartments;* Baron BAURCHEL *is diſcovered in the Diſguiſe of a Fortune-teller, with* DARTZ *ſtanding by him, adjuſting part of his Dreſs.*

Dart. I WILL do well enough. Stand majeſtically by this great chair, with your worſted robe thrown over the arm of it; it will ſpread out your figure, and make it more impoſing. — Bravo! You aſſume the aſtrological dignity to admiration; the rolling of your eyes under that black hood almoſt appals me. Be as good an aſtrologer as you have been an Armenian Jew, Baron, and we ſhall be triumphant.

Bar. As good, Dartz! If I am not a dolt, I ſhall be better: for there is no danger of loſing my temper now; and being fairly engaged in it, methinks I could aſſume as many ſhapes as Proteus, to be revenged on this falſe Hyena and her deteſtible cub.

Dart. Aye, that is your true ſpirit. But I muſt leave you now, and wait in the anti-room for the Count, who will be here preſently.

[EXIT.

Bar. (*after muſing ſome time*) Superlative baſeneſs and ingratitude! That ſonnet, of all the ſonnets I ever wrote, is the moſt exquiſitely feel-

ing and tender.—When I read it to her, ſhe wept. — Were her tears feigned? — I can't believe it. — Aſſaſſins will weep at a high-wrought ſcene of tragedy, and cut the author's throat when it is over. —— Even ſo. — It ſuited her purpoſes better to laugh at my verſes, than acknowledge their genuine effect; and ſo, forgetting every kindneſs ſhe owed me, —— O the deteſtable worlding! I'll ——— Huſh, huſh, huſh! they are coming.

(*Re-enter* DARTZ, *followed by* VALDEMERE, *who walks ſhrinkingly behind, peeping paſt his ſhoulder to the* Baron, *who ſlightly inclines his body, putting his hand with great ſolemnity three times to his forehead.*)

Dart. (*aſide to* Vald. *after a pauſe*) Faith, Valdemere, I dare ſcarcely ſpeak to him; 'tis well you are with me; will you ſpeak to him?

Vald. No; 'tis your own affair; ſtand to it yourſelf.

Dart. (*aloud*) Learned and gifted Mortal, we come to thee.

Vald. (*aſide, jogging his arm*) Don't ſay *we*— 'tis your own affair entirely.

Dart. Well, I ſhould ſay, gifted Sage, not *we* but *I* come to thee, to know what fortune is abiding me in this up-and-down world. I am a lover and a ſoldier, and liable, as both, to great viciſſitudes.

Bar. Thou ſay'ſt truly, my Son. And who is

this young man ſo much wiſer than thyſelf, who does not deſire to look into futurity?

Dart. It is my friend.

Bar. (*after examining the faces of both for ſome time*) Say more than friend.

Dart. How ſo?

Bar. (*ſtill continuing to gaze alternately at them*) 'Tis very wonderful: in all the years of my occult experience, I never met the like before, but once.

Vald. (*aſide to* Dart.) What does he mean? Aſk him, Man.

Dart. You never met the like but once! What mean you, Father?

Bar. (*anſwers not, but continues to look at them, while* Vald., *unable to bear it longer, ſhrinks again behind* Dart.) Shrink not back, young Man: my eyes make not the fate they ſee, and cannot do you harm. — 'Tis wonderful! There is not in your two faces one trait of reſemblance, yet your fortunes in the ſelf-ſame mould are caſt: ye are in fate twin-brothers.

Dart. Indeed! then my friend need only liſten to my fortune, and he'll have his own into the bargain.

Bar. Nay, nay, my Sons, be adviſed, and enquire not into futurity. They are the happieſt men, who have feweſt dealings with ſuch miſerable beings as myſelf. Beings who are compelled to know the impending evils of hapleſs humanity, without the power of averting them. Be adviſed, and ſuppreſs unprofitable curioſity.

Dart. By my fay, Sage! I cannot fuppreſs it.

Bar. Then let your friend go. He is wiſe enough not to wiſh to know his future fate, and I have already ſaid, you are in this twin-brothers.

Dart. Retire then, Valdemere.

Vald. (*agitated and irreſolute*) I had better, perhaps. —— Yet there is within me a ſtrange and perverſe craving —— I will retire (*going to the door, and ſtopping ſhort*). Live in fearful ignorance, fancying evils that may never be! 'Twere better to know all at once. (*Returning.*) Is it our general fortunes only, or is there ſome particular circumſtance of our fate, now preſent to your mind, of which you adviſe us to be ignorant?

Bar. There is ———

Vald. (*pulling* Dart. *by the arm*) Come away; come away; don't hear it.

Dart. I am bound by ſome ſpell; I muſt ſtay to hear it.

Vald. I am certainly bound alſo; I know not how it is; I muſt hear it too.

Baur. Be it as you will. (*After writing characters on a table, with other mummeries,*) Propoſe your queſtions.

Dart. The name, age and quality, of her who is my love. (Bar. *writes again*) The initials of her name I proteſt, and her age to a day, nineteen years and a half. And her quality, good Father?

Bar. Only daughter and heireſs of an eminent Dutch butter-dealer.

Dart. Nay, you are ſcarcely right there, Sage; you might at leaſt have called him Burgo-maſter. — But let it paſs. She loves me, I hope. (Bur. *nods.*) I knew it. And now let me know if ſhe ſhall ever be my wife; and how many children we ſhall have.

Vald. (*aſide to* Dart.) Deuce take wife and children too! What is all this drivling for?

Dart. (*aſide to him*) I thought you were in love as well as myſelf.

Vald. So I am; but be ſatisfied that ſhe loves you, and paſs on to things of deeper import.

Dart. (*aſide*) Can any thing be of deeper import? (*Aloud*) I ſhould like very well, gifted Father, to have two or three black-haired burly knaves, and a little fair damſel to play with.

Vald. (*aſide to* Dart.) Would they were all drowned in a horſe-pond! Look how ruefully the Sage ſhakes his head at thee: wife or children thou wilt never have.

Dart. Shall I never be married, Father? What ſhall prevent it?

Bar. Death.

Dart. Shall I loſe her? (*Turning to* Vald.) Do you not tremble for Livia?

Vald. Is it her death? Did he ſay ſo? Aſk him.

Bar. Death will prevent it. — Let me leave you.

Vald. (*ſeizing the* Baron's *robe*) Whoſe death? Whoſe death? Is it only the Lady's?

Bar. Nay, do not detain me. There is a deep depreſſion on my mind. Good-night to

you! I'll tell you the remainder when you are better prepared to hear it.

Dart. No no! the preſent time is the beſt.

Vald. (*in a feeble voice*) You had better let him go.

Dart. (*catching hold of the* Bar.) You muſt not leave us in this tremendous uncertainty. Whoſe death ſhall prevent my marriage?

Bar. Let me examine, then. Stretch out your hand. (Dartz *holds out his hand, and* Vald. *involuntarily does the ſame, but draws it back again as* Bar. *begins to inſpect it.*) Nay, don't draw back your hand: I muſt examine both palms to ſee if the line of death be there.

Dart. The line of death muſt be on every man's hand.

Bar. But if it be early or impending death, the waving of the ſhroud will lie acroſs it. (Vald. *ſhudders and turns away his head, and the* Bar., *after looking at both their hands, ſtarts back from them, and ſhakes his head piteouſly.*)

Dart. What is the matter, Father? What is the matter?

Bar. Aſk not; I will not tell what I know; nothing ſhall compel me. [Exit *haſtily.*

Vald. (*turning round*) Is he gone? Went he by the door?

Dart. What way he went, I know not. He has vaniſhed I believe: did you hear his ſteps on the floor?

Vald. I heard nothing.

Dart. (*after a ſhort pauſe*) How do you feel, Count?

Vald. Ha! do you feel it too?

Dart. Feel what?

Vald. As if a cold ſhroud were drawn over you.

Dart. Aye, ſo I think I do.—But never mind it: we may ſtill have ſome good months or weeks before us; let us go to the banquet and put a merry face upon it: a cup of wine will warm us again. What, though my grandam dreamt at my birth that I ſhould be ſlain in a breach, and the weird witch of Croningberg confirmed it: I'll live and be merry while I may.

Vald. Ha! and thy grandam had ſuch a dream!

Dart. Never mind it: a cup of wine will ſoon cheer us again.

Vald. Would to God I had one now!

Dart. You have no time to take wine at preſent: I hear a buſtle below; they are going to the grotto already.—Who's at the door? (*Opens the door.*) Your valet with your new ſuit for the banquet. I'll leave you then. (Exit Dartz, *and enter* Lorimore *with a ſuit of cloaths over his arm, followed by* Page.)

Lor. I have waited this half hour, my Lord, to hear your bell, and the ladies are waiting for you to go to the grotto. Look at this coat, my Lord: the faſhion of it is exquiſite, and it has ſuch an air with it; there is not, beſides

yourſelf, a man in the empire that would know how to wear it.

Page. His conſummate valet excepted.

Lor. Hold your peace, Sirrah. —— Look here, my Lord; if I had not myſelf given the tailor a few hints, he could never have had genius enough to finiſh it in this ſtyle. I'd give a ducat that the Marquis De Florimel's valet could ſee it. He pretends —— But you don't look at it, my Lord: what is the matter with you?

Vald. (*eagerly*) Is any thing the matter?

Lor. Nothing, my Lord; but the ladies are waiting for you to go with them to the grotto: won't you be pleaſed to put on your new coat?

Vald. Put it on then. (*Stretching out his arms to put on the coat.*)

Lor. But we muſt firſt take off the old coat.

Vald. I forgot that. (*Trying to pull off his coat.*) It ſticks ſtrangely to me: d'off it if thou can'ſt.

Lor. (*after pulling off his coat*) Now, my Lord, thruſt your arm into this beautiful ſleeve; the whole *beau monde* of Paris can't ſhew you its fellow. — That is the wrong arm, my Lord.

Vald. It will do; it will do.

Lor. Pardon me, my Lord; your left arm won't do for the right ſleeve of the coat.

Vald. (*holding out his other arm, and fumbling ſome time*) There is no hole at all to put my arm into.

Lor. Nay you puſh your hand paſt it; here; here.

Vald. Where ſayeſt thou? 'Tis mightily perplexed.

Page. (*aſide to himſelf*) Either the coat or the coat's maſter is perplexed enough. (*Aloud, offering him his hat*) You won't go, my Lord, without your new hat and plume.

Vald. Plume?

Page. Yes, my Lord, and it will wave ſo handſomely too, for the company walk by torch-light in proceſſion.

Vald. Let them move on, and I'll follow.

Page. No, they can't go without you, my Lord.

Vald. How is it? Am I one of the pall-bearers?

Page. It is not a funeral, my Lord.

Vald. I forgot; the chillneſs of the night has bewildered me.

Lor. You are not well, my Lord; what is the matter with you?

Vald. Nothing, leave me alone for a little.

Lor. Will you not join the company? The proceſſion is prepared to ſet out.

Vald. Aye, very true; tell me when they move the body, and I'll follow it.

Page. He, he, he! a funeral again.

Lor. Unmannerly imp; what art thou ſnickering at? (*To* Vald. *in a loud diſtinct voice*) It is not a funeral, my Lord. The Lady Livia, and

the Counteſs your mother, are going to the grotto, and are waiting impatiently below till you join them.

Vald. (*rubbing his forehead*) It is ſo: how went it out of my head? That wine after dinner muſt have fuddled me. I'll join them immediately.

Lor. Lean on me, my Lord; you are not well, I fear.

Vald. No no! the fumes of that diabolical champaign have left my head now.

Lor. It muſt have been mixed with ſome black drug, I think, to produce ſuch a ſombre intoxication.

Page. It may reſt in the cellar long enough for me; I'll none on't.

Lor. Peace, young Sir; and go before with one of theſe lights.

[EXEUNT, Page *lighting them.*

SCENE II.

An arched Grotto, the Roof and Sides of which are cruſted over with Shells and Corals, &c.; a Banquet ſet out, ornamented with Lamps and Feſtoons of Flowers. *Enter* Counteſs, *led in by* DARTZ, *and* LIVIA *by* VALDEMERE, *two other Ladies by the* Baron *and* WALTER BAURCHEL, Page *and* Attendants *following.*

Liv. Welcome all to my ſea-nymph's hall; and do me the honour to place yourſelves at

table, as beſt pleaſes your fancy, without ceremony. — If you hear any ſound without, 'tis but the rolling of forty fathom water over-head; and nothing can intrude on our merriment, but a whale, or a mermaid, or a dolphin.

Walt. This ſame ſea-nymph muſt have an ingenious art of cultivating roſes in the bottom of the ocean.

Liv. It muſt be a perfect contrivance indeed that eſcapes the correct taſte of Mr. Walter Baurchel. Fruit and ices perhaps may likewiſe be an incongruity: ſhall I order them away, and feaſt you on ſalt-water and limpits?

Bar. Aye, pickle him up with brine, in a corner by himſelf; for he has a ſecret ſympathy with every thing uncheriſhing and pungent.

Liv. Do me the honour to take your places. I can pretty well divine which of the ladies will be your charge, gentle Baron. — But how is this? The Counteſs and you exchange ſtrange looks, methinks, as if you did not know one another.

Bar. Some people exchange ſtrange looks, fair Livia, from the oppoſite cauſe.

Liv. I don't comprehend you: ſhould you have preferred being in maſks? That indeed would have been a leſs common amuſement.

Bar. By no means, Madam; the Counteſs and I meeting one another unmaſked is a very uncommon one.

Counteſs. You know beſt, Baron, as far as you

are yourſelf concerned: you always appeared to me a good and amiable man, and a moſt tender and elegant poet.

Bar. Of which, Madam, you always took great care to inform me, as a ſincere and diſintereſted friend.

Liv. Ha! what is all this? Poo, poo! take your places together as uſual: a love-quarrel never mars merry-making.

Walt. Yes, tender doves! let them ſmooth down their ruffled feathers by one another as ſweetly as they can. Why ſhould you, Madam, give yourſelf any uneaſineſs about it. — But the Count, methinks, is leſs ſprightly than uſual: there are no more love-quarrels, I hope, in the party.

Liv. (*looking at* Vald.) Indeed you are very ſilent: I have been too much occupied to obſerve it before. You don't like my grotto, I fear.

Vald. Pardon me! I like it very well: I like it very much.

Liv. But this is not your uſual manner of expreſſing approbation.

Vald. Is it not? you do me honour to remember it. (*Speaking confuſedly as the company ſit down to table*) My ſpirits are very — that is to ſay, not altogether, but conſiderably —

Dart. Low, Valdemere?

Vald. (*ſnatching up a glaſs and filling a bumper of wine, which he ſwallows haſtily*) No, Dartz; light as a feather. My tongue was ſo confound-

edly parch'd: this wine is excellent (*drinking another bumper*). There is more beauty in theſe decorations than I was aware of: the effect, the taſte is incomparable. (*Drinks again.*) It is truly exquiſite.

Walt. The champaign you mean, Count? I ſhould have gueſſ'd as much.

Vald. No no; the decorations.——Is it champaign? Let me judge of its flavour more conſiderately (*drinks again*); upon honour it is fit for the table of a god.—But our hoſteſs *is* a divinity, and 'tis nectar we quaff at her board.—Wine! common earthly wine! I'll thruſt any man thro' with my rapier that ſays it is but wine.

Bar. Keep your courage for a better cauſe, Count. Report ſays the enemy are near us; and you may ſoon have the honour to exert it in defence of your divinity.

Walt. Which will be a ſacred war, you know, and will entitle you, perhaps, to the glory of martyrdom.

Vald. The enemy?

Walt. Aye, report ſays they are near us.

Vald. Be it ſo: I ſhall be prepared for them (*drinks again*).

Dart. (*aſide to* Walt.) By my faith, he will be prepared for them, for he'll fill himſelf mortal drunk, and fruſtrate our project entirely. (*Aſide to* Page) Go, Boy, and bid them make haſte: thou underſtand'ſt me?

Page. (*aſide*) Truſt me for that: the Philiſtines ſhall be upon him immediately.

Countefs. Valdemere is immeafurably fond of war and of military glory, which the tenderneſs of a too fearful mother has hitherto with difficulty reſtrained; and in your cauſe, charming Livia, he will be enthuſiaſtically devoted.

Liv. I claim him then as my Knight, whene'er I ſtand in need of his valorous arms; though it may, perhaps, prove but a troubleſome honour.

Vald. It is an honour I would purchaſe — aye, purchaſe with a thouſand lives —— I ſay it, divine Livia, with a thouſand lives. —— Life! — life! — What is it? but the breath of a moment: I ſcorn it. (*Getting up from table, and reeling about.*) The enemy did they ſay? Let an hoſt of them come: this ſword ſhall devour every mother's ſon of them. — I'm prepared for them all.

Bar. (*aſide to* Dart.) He is too well prepared; we were fooliſh to let him drink ſo much.

Countefs. (*aſide to* Vald.) Be ſeated again; you diſturb the company.

Vald. (*ſtill reeling about*) Aye, divine Livia; but the breath of a moment; I ſcorn it.

(*An alarm without: Re-enter* Page; *as if much frightened.*)

Page. O my Lady Livia! O my Maſter! O gentles all! a party of the enemy is coming to attack the caſtle, and they'll murder every ſoul of us.

Vald. Speak plainer, Wretch; what ſaid'ſt thou?

Page. (*ſpeaking loud in his ear*) The enemy are coming to attack the caſtle.

Vald. Thou lieſt.

Page. I wiſh I did; but he will confirm my words.

(*Pointing to a* Servant *who now enters in alarm.*)

Ser. (*to* Vald.) He ſpeaks truth, my Lord; they are approaching in great ſtrength.

Vald. Approaching! are they near us then?

Page. Aye marry! too near. They beat no drum, as you may gueſs; but the heavy ſound of their march ſtrikes from the hollow ground moſt fearfully.

(Valdemere *becoming perfectly ſober, ſtands confounded.*)

Liv. (*and the* Ladies, *much alarmed*) What ſhall we do? What will become of us?

Dart. Have courage, Madam; have courage, Ladies; the valiant Valdemere is your defender; you have nothing to fear.

Liv. (*and* Ladies *crowding cloſe to* Vald.) Aye, dear Count; our ſafety depends on you. Save us! Save us! We have no refuge but you. (*All clamouring at once.*)

Vald. Huſh, huſh, huſh! They'll hear you. (*In a low choked voice.*)

Dart. Nay, don't whiſper, Valdemere; they are not ſo near us yet.

Bar. Rouſe ye, Count, and give your orders for the defence of the caſtle immediately.

Dart. We are ready to execute them, be they ever ſo daring.

Walt. There is no time to be loſt; your orders, Count: do you comprehend us?

Vald. My orders!

Dart. Your orders quickly.

Vald. I am thinking——I was thinking ——

Page. (*aſide.*) How to ſave yourſelf I believe.

Bar. Well, noble Count, what are your thoughts.

Vald. I — I — I am conſidering ——

Walt. Thought and conſideration become a good Commander, with ſome ſpice of activity into the bargain.

Dart. There is no time to deliberate; iſſue your orders immediately. Under ſuch an able commander we may ſtand a ſiege of ſome days.

Vald. A ſiege! — Aye, the very thing — and ſo ſuddenly!

Page. You tremble, my Lord; ſhall I bring you drops?

Counteſs. Thou lieſt, Boy; get thee gone! (*Aſide to* Vald.) Are you beſide yourſelf? Tell them what to do; they wait for your orders.

Vald. I order them all to the walls. Haſte, haſte, (*puſhing off the* Ladies *who ſtand next him*) and man them as well as you can.

Bar. Woman them, you mean, Valdemere; theſe are Ladies you puſh.

Counteſs. Nay; you crowd upon him too much — you confuſe him: he is as brave as his ſword, if you would leave off confounding him ſo.

Liv. Dear Valdemere! What is the matter? Rouſe yourſelf, rouſe yourſelf! (*A great alarm without.*) Hear that ſound: they are at hand; what ſhall we do? There is a vault by the ſide of this grotto, where we poor miſerable women may be concealed, but ——

Vald. (*eagerly*) Where is it? My duty is to take care of you, dear Livia: come, come with me, and I'll place you in ſecurity. (*Catches hold of the* Page *in his hurry, and runs off with him.*)

Counteſs. Stop, ſtop! That is the Page you have got. Will you leave me behind you?

(*As* Vald. *is about to drag the* Page *into a receſs at the ſide of the ſtage, the* Boy *laughs outright, and he diſcovers his miſtake.*)

Vald. Off, Wretch! Where is Livia; come, come, my Life! where are you? (*Stretching out one hand to her, while his body bends eagerly the other way.*)

Liv. No, Count; I will not go. Alarm overcame me for the moment; but now I will enter the caſtle; and if the enemy ſhould take it, they ſhall find me there in a ſituation becoming its Miſtreſs.

Omnes. Bravely ſaid, Lady! Let us all to the caſtle.

Dart. With or without a commander, we'll defend it to the laſt extremity.

Counteſs. (*going to* Vald. *and ſpeaking in his ear, while ſhe pulls him along with her*) Come

with the reſt, or be diſgraced for ever. Did I put a ſword by your ſide, a cockade in your hat, for this?

(*A ſtill louder alarm without, and* EXEUNT *in great hurry and confuſion.*)

SCENE III.

A Grove by the Caſtle; the Scene darkened, and moving Lights ſeen through the Trees from the Caſtle, ſometimes gleaming from the Battlements, and ſometimes from the Windows: Enter NINA *with a Peaſant's Surtout over her Dreſs.*

Nin. O, if in this diſguiſe I could but enter the caſtle! Alas! the company are gone in, and the gate is now ſhut. I'll wait here till day-break.—Woe is me! He paſt by me quickly, and heard me not when I ſpoke to him.——O mercy! Soldiers coming here! (*Hides herſelf among ſt ſome buſhes.*)

Enter BOUNCE, *followed by* Soldiers.

Bounce. Come, let us hector it here awhile: I'll warrant ye we make a noiſe that might do for the ſiege of Troy.

1*ſt Sold.* Aye, you're a book-learned man, Corporal: you're always talking of that there ſiege. Could they throw a bomb in thoſe days, or fire off an eighteen-pounder any better than ourſelves? (*Firing heard without.*)

Bounce. Hark! our Comrades are at it on the other ſide: let us to it here at the ſame time. I'll warrant ye we'll make the fair Lady within, and my Lady's fair gentlewomen, and the village Cure himſelf, ſhould he be of the party, caſt up their eyes like boiled fiſh, and ſay ten pater-noſter's in a breath.

(*Voices without.*)

Hallo! hallo! Comrades! Who goes there?

(*Enter* 2*d* Soldier *and others.*)

2*d Sold.* What makes you ſo quiet, an' be hanged to you! An old woman with her ſpinning-wheel might be ſtationed here to as much purpoſe. I could not tell where to find you.

Bounce. By my faith, 'tis the firſt time Corporal Bounce was ever accuſed of not making noiſe enough. Come; we'll give you a round ſhall make the whole principality tremble.

(*They prepare to fire, when* 3*d* Soldier *enters in haſte.*)

3*d. Sold.* Hold, there! Spare your powder for better purpoſe: an advanced corps of the enemy is coming in good earneſt, and marching in haſte to the caſtle.

Bounce. So, we're to have real fighting then! Faith, Comrade, valiant as I am, a little ſham thunder, and a good ſupper after it, would have pleaſed my humour full as well at this preſent time. Peſt take it! They muſt open the gates

and let us in. What gentlemen are in the caſtle? We have no officer to command us.

3*d Sold.* The Chevalier Dartz is there, and Count Valdemere.

Bounce. Ah! he's but a craven-bird, that ſame Count: a kind of Free-maſon-ſoldier, for parades and proceſſions, and the like. If the young Baron de Bertrand were there, we ſhould be nobly commanded.

3*d Sold.* Don't ſtand prating here; let us give the alarm to the reſt of our Comrades, and get into the caſtle ere the enemy come up with us.

Bounce. Come, then! But what moves amongſt the buſhes? (*Pulling out* Nina) A girl, i'faith, diſguiſed in a countryman's ſurtout.

Nin. O dear — O mercy! Don't be angry with me: I'm a poor harmleſs creature.

Bounce. Bleſſings on thee, pretty One! thou'rt harmleſs enough: don't think we're afraid of thee. Come away with us: we'll lodge thee ſafely in the caſtle.

[EXEUNT.

ACT V.

SCENE I. — *A Hall in the Caſtle*: *Enter* LIVIA *and the* Baron, *talking as they enter.*

Liv. YES, Baron; you and your friends have, by this plot of yours, taught me a ſevere leſſon; and I thank you for it, though my own underſtanding ought to have made it unneceſſary.

Bar. Dear Livia; why ſhould a young woman like you be ſo much affronted at finding her underſtanding — for you are mighty fond of that word *underſtanding* — not quite infallible? At the age of 63, an age I ſhall henceforth honeſtly own I have attained, one is not ſurpriſed at ſome ſmall deficiencies even in one's own underſtanding. One can then, as I ſhall henceforth do, give up the vanity of being a wiſe man.

Liv. And a poet, too, Baron? That were too much to give up in one day.

Bar. Poſterity will ſettle that point, Madam, and I ſhall give myſelf very little concern about the matter.

Liv. Which one can eaſily perceive is perfectly indifferent to you. (*Noiſe without*) What encreaſed noiſe is that? Since your poor victim is already ſacrified, (for they tell me he is gone,

on pretence of violent illneſs, to the vaults under the caſtle,) why continue this mock-war any longer?

Enter Servant.

Bar. By this man's looks one might ſuppoſe that our mockery had turned to earneſt.

Liv. (*to* Serv.) What is the matter?

Serv. A party of the real enemy, Madam, *has* come to attack the caſtle, and is now fighting with the Chevalier's men at the gate.

Liv. Why did you not open the gate to receive the Chevalier's men?

Serv. They called to us to get in; but we could not diſtinguiſh them from the enemy, who were cloſe on their heels; ſo we let down the portcullis, a'nt pleaſe you, and they muſt fight it out under the walls as they can.

Bar. Is the Chevalier in the caſtle?

Serv. O lud, no, Sir! he ſallied out by the poſtern with Mr. Walter Baurchel and ſome of the domeſtics, and is fighting with them like a devil. But his numbers are ſo ſmall, we fear he muſt be beaten; and———

Liv. And how can we hold out with neither men, ammunition, nor proviſions. Merciful Heaven deliver us!

(*Enter* Maid-ſervants, *wringing their hands.*)

Maids. O lud, lud! What will become of us? What will become of us? What ſhall we do?

Bar. Any thing you pleaſe but ſtun us with ſuch frantic clamour. Get off to your laundries and your ſtore-rooms, and your dreſſing cloſets, and don't encreaſe the confuſion here.

(Exeunt Maids, *clamouring and wringing their hands.*)

Liv. You are rough with thoſe poor creatures; they are very much frightened.

Bar. Not half ſo frightened as thoſe who make leſs noiſe. They think it neceſſary to raiſe an out-cry, becauſe they are women and it is expected from them. I have been long enough duped in this way; I have no patience with it now. — But I muſt go to the walls and try to be of uſe (*going*).

(*Voice without*) Succour! Succour!

Liv. Ha! there is a welcome cry.

Enter Jeanetta.

Succour did they ſay?

Jean. Yes, my Lady: a band of men come to relieve us; and their leader is charging the enemy ſo furiouſly ſword in hand! — the Chevalier, they ſaid, fought like a devil; but he fights like forty devils. We have been looking down upon them by torch-light from the walls; and their ſwords flaſh, and their plumes nod, and their eyes glare in the light ſo gallantly, I could almoſt ſally out myſelf and take a bout with them.

Bar. (*to* Jean.) Aye, Minx; thou'rt forward enough to do any thing.

Liv. Nay, chide her not when ſhe brings us good news. — Heaven be praiſed for this timely aid! What brave man has brought it to us? Doſt thou know him, Jeanetta?

Jean. No, Madam: for, thank God! his back is to us, and his face to the foe; but there is a ſmack in his air of the Baron de Bertrand.

Bar. Ha! my brave Antonio! I'll be ſworn it is he. Come; let us to the ramparts, and look down on the combatants.

Liv. Heaven grant there be not much blood-ſhed! [EXEUNT.

SCENE II.

A dark Vault: Enter VALDEMERE, *followed by* Page, *carrying a torch in one hand, and his plumed Cap in the other.*

Vald. (*after hurrying ſome paces onward, ſtops ſhort, and looks wildly round him*) Is there no paſſage this way?

Page. No, my Lord; but you run marvellouſly faſt for one ſo ill as you are: I could ſcarcely keep up with you: pray ſtop here awhile and take breath.

Vald. Stop here, and that found ſtill behind me!

Page. What ſound?

Vald. Did'ſt thou not hear the tread of heavy ſteps behind us? The trampling of a whole band?

Page. It was but the ſound of my feet following you.

Vald. Only that. The caſtle is taken thou ſay'ſt, and the ruffians are in queſt of me.

Page. Aye, marry are they! Their ſavage leader ſays, as the old tale-book has it, that he'll have the heart's blood of Count Valdemere on his ſword before he eat or ſleep.

Vald. His ſword!

Page. Aye, my Lord, a good heavy rapier I aſſure you; and he ſwears, ſince you have not fought like a man on the walls, he'll kill you like a rat in your hole.

Vald. I am horribly beſet!

Page. Aye, hot work, my Lord; the big drops fall from your forehead, like a thunder ſhower.

Vald. Thou lieſt; I am cold as the damp of a ſepulchre.

Page. And pale too, as the thing that lies within it.

Vald. (*liſtening*) Hark, hark! they are coming.

Page. I hear nothing.

Vald. Thou doſt! thou doſt! lying Varlet, with that treacherous leer upon thy face: thou haſt decoyed me here for deſtruction. (*Catching him by the throat.*)

Page. For mercy, my Lord, let go your hold! I hear nothing, as I hope to be ſaved, but our own voices ſounding again from the vaulted roof over our heads.

Vald. Aye, it is vaulted; thou'rt right perhaps. — This ſtrange ringing in my ears will not ſuffer me to know the ſounds that really are, from thoſe are not. — Why doſt thou grin ſo? I have a frenzy I believe; I know I am ſtrangely diſordered. It was not ſo with me yeſterday. I could then —— Doſt thou grin ſtill? Stand ſome paces off: why art thou always ſo near me?

Page. (*retiring to the oppoſite ſide of the ſtage*) I had beſt perhaps: his hand has the gripe of a madman.

Vald. (*leans his back againſt the ſide-ſcene, preſſing his temples tightly with both hands, and ſpeaking low to himſelf*) This horrible tumult of nature! it knows within itſelf the moments that precede its deſtruction.

Page. I muſt let him reſt for a time. (*Pauſe.*) — It is cold here doing nothing. (*Puts on his cap.*) — He moves not: his eyes have a fixed ghaſtly ſtare; truly he is ill. (*Going up to him.*) You are very ill, my Lord.

Vald. (*ſtarting*) Have mercy upon me!

Page. Don't ſtart, my Lord; it was I who ſpoke to you.

Vald. Who art thou?

Page. Your Page, my Lord.

Vald. Ha! only thou! thy ſtature ſeemed gigantic.

Page. This half-yard of plume in my cap, and your good fancy have made it ſo.

Vald. Aye; thou wert unbonnetted before. Keep by me then, but don't ſpeak to me. (*Putting his hand again to his temples.*)

Page. Nay, I muſt aſk what is the matter. You are very ill: what is the matter with you?

Vald. There is a beating within me like the pendulum of a great clock.

Page. Is it in your heart or your head, my Lord?

Vald. Don't ſpeak to me: it is every where.

Page. Reſt here a-while; they will not diſcover you. You are indeed very ill. — Are you worſe?

Vald. Speak not; my mouth is parched like a cinder; I can't anſwer thee.

Page. I'll fetch you ſome water. (*Going.*)

Vald. (*ſpringing acroſs the ſtage after him*) Not for the univerſe.

Page. (*aſide*) He's ſtrong enough ſtill I ſee. (*Turning his ear to the entry of the vault.*)

Vald. Thou'rt liſtening; thou hear'ſt ſomething.

Page. By my faith they are coming now.

Vald. Merciful heaven! where ſhall I run?

Page. Where you pleaſe, my Lord.

Vald. (*hurrying two or three ſteps on, in a kind of groping way*) The light fails me: I don't ſee where I am going.

Page. Nay it burns very clearly; I fear it will diſcover where we are.

Vald. Put it out! put it out for God's ſake!

— Where is it? (*Seizes on the torch, puts it out ſtamping on it with his feet, then laying himſelf on the floor*) I am gone — I am dead; tell them ſo for God's ſake!

Page. I ſhall tell but half a lie when I do.

Enter Baron *and* Walter Baurchel *with Soldier's Cloaks thrown over them, and* Livia *in the ſame Diſguiſe with a military Cap drawn over her Eyes, a* Servant *preceding them with Torches.*

Liv. (*ſhrinking back as ſhe enters*) Is he dead? (Page *nods, and winks to her ſignificantly.*)

Bar. (*in a rough voice*) Has the Caitiff eſcaped my ſword? Have I thirſted for his blood in vain?

Walt. (*in a rough voice alſo*) Is he really dead? I'll lay my hand on his breaſt, and feel if his heart beats.

Page. O don't do that, gracious merciful Sir! You'll but defile your worſhipful fingers in touching of a dead corſe, which brings bad luck with it.

Walt. Well then, Boy, I will not; but there are a couple of brawny knaves without, who are burying the dead for us; they ſhall come forthwith, and caſt him into the pit with the reſt.

Page. O lud, no, Sir! don't do that, pleaſe your worſhipful Goodneſs! What if he ſhould come alive again?

Walt. Never fear that: I'll draw this rapier croſs his laced cravat, and make it ſecure.

Vald. (*ſtarting up upon his knees*) Mercy,

mercy! ſlay not a dying man; let me breathe my laſt breath without violence.

Liv. (*covering her eyes, and turning away her head*) Torment him no more, I beſeech you!

(*Enter* ANTONIO, *and* DARTZ *with his arm bound up.*)

Ant. Nay, Gentlemen, this is unfeeling, ungenerous, unmanly. Stand upon your feet, Count Valdemere (*raiſing him up*), there are none but friends near you, if friends they may be called, who have played you ſuch an abominable trick.

Vald. How is this? Art thou Antonio? Where are thoſe who would have butcher'd me?

Omnes, Liv. and *Ant. excepted.* Ha, ha, ha! (*laughing ſome time.*)

Bar. No where, Valdemere, but in your own imagination. We have put this deceit upon you to cure you of arrogance and boaſting.

Walt. Running the uſual riſk, gentle Count, of not having our ſervices very thankfully acknowledged.

Vald. You have laid a diabolical ſnare for me, and I have fallen into it moſt wretchedly. — I have been ſtrangely overcome. I have been moved as with magic. — I have been —— I — I know not — What ſhall I call it?

Walt. Give yourſelf no trouble about that, Count; we can find a name for it.

Ant. Nay, good Sir; you ſhall not call it by any name a man would be aſham —— (*correct-*

ing himself) unwilling to hear. The Count, as Dartz has informed me, while I bound up his wound above ſtairs, has been tampered with, by dreams and fortune-telling and other devices, in a way that might have overcome many a man, who, differently circumſtanced, would not have ſhrunk from his duty in the field. And ſhall we ſport wantonly with a weakneſs of our nature in ſome degree common to all? We admire a brave man for overcoming it, and ſhould pity the leſs brave when it overcomes him.

Liv. (*catching his hand eagerly*) Noble Antonio!

Ant. Young man, I thank you: this ſqueeze of the hand tells me I have you upon my ſide.

Vald. And let me alſo ſay, "Noble Antonio!" — And what more can I ſay! I have not deſerved this generous treatment from you.

Ant. Say nothing more: the tranſactions of this night ſhall be as if they had never been: they will never be mentioned by any of us.

Walt. Speak for yourſelf, Antonio De Bertrand; my tongue is a free agent, and will not be bridled by another perſon's feelings. But there is one condition on which I conſent to be ſilent as the grave; and the Baron and Chevalier concur with me.

(Bar. *and* Dartz.) We do ſo.

[Exit Bar.

Dart. We but require of Valdemere to do what, as a man of honour he is bound to do; and ſatisfied on this point, our ſilence is ſecured for ever.

(*Re-enter* Bar. *leading in* NINA.)

Bar. (*to* Vald.) Look on this fair gentlewoman: her father was a reſpectable officer, though misfortunes prevented his promotion. You have taken advantage of her ſituation, being under the protection of the Counteſs your mother, as a God-daughter and diſtant relation, to uſe her moſt unworthily. Make her your wife, and receive, as her dowry, your reputation in the world untarniſhed.

Walt. Now, good, heroic, ſentimental Antonio; is this too much to require of the noble perſonage you plead for?

Ant. On this I am compelled to be ſilent.

Bar. Will Count Valdemere vouchſafe us an anſwer? Will you marry her or not, Count?

Vald. I have indeed — I ought in ſtrict juſtice —— She will not accept of one who has uſed her ſo unworthily.

Page. (*eagerly*) I hope not: I would rather than a thouſand crowns ſhe would refuſe him.

Dart. Will you have him or not, pretty Nina? Don't be afraid to refuſe him: we ſhan't think the worſe of you if you do. (Nina *ſtands ſilent and weeping.*)

Page. (*aſide to* Nina) Don't have him, Woman; he's a coward and a coxcomb, and a —— don't have him.

Nina. (*aſide*) Ah, you have never loved him as I have done, Brother.

Page. (*aloud*) Murrain take thee and thy love too! thou haſt no more ſpirit in thee than a worm.

Bar. Bravo, Boy! thou haſt enough of it, I ſee; and I'll put a ſtand of colours in thy hand as ſoon as thou art ſtrong enough to carry them. Thou art my boy now; I will protect thee.

Page. I thank you, Baron. — And my ſiſter; will you protect her too?

Bar. Yes, Child; both of you.

Page. Refuſe him then, Nina: haſt thou no more pride about thee?

Nina. Alas! I ſhould have more pride: I know I ſhould; but I have been ſadly humbled.

Page. Thou'lt be ſtill more ſo if thou art his wife, truſt me! for he'll deſpiſe thee, and cow thee, and make thee a poor ſlave to his will. Thou'lt tremble at every glance of his eye, and every turn of his humourſome fancy. — He'll treat thee like a very ——

Vald. Stop, ſpiteful Wretch! I'll cheriſh and protect her, and turn every word thou haſt uttered to a manifeſt and abominable falſehood. — Give me thy hand, Nina; thou really loveſt me; no one will do it but thee; and I ſhall have need of ſomebody to love me.

Omnes. Well ſaid, Count! this is done like a man!

Ant. (*to* Page) Faith, Boy! thoſe ſharp words of thine were worth a ſtore of gentle perſuaſion. Thou haſt woo'd for thy ſiſter in a ſpell-like faſhion as witches ſay their prayers backwards. I wiſh ſomebody would court my miſtreſs for

me in the ſame manner: 'tis the only chance have of winning her.

Liv. (*in a feigned voice*) I'll do that for thee, gallant De Bertrand; for I know faults enough of yours to acquaint her with, beſides the greateſt of all faults, concealing good talents *under a buſhel;* every tittle of which I will tell her forthwith, and ſhe'll marry you, no doubt, out of ſpite.

Ant. Thanks, pleaſant Stripling! May thy ſucceſs be equal to thy zeal! (*Taking her hand*) Thy name, Youth: thou haſt a pretty gait in that warlike cloak of thine, but thy cap overſhadows thee perverſely. — Ha! this is not a boy's hand! — That ring — O Heavens!

(*Retires ſome paces back in confuſion, while* Livia, *taking off her cap and cloak, makes him a profound curteſey; and pauſes, expecting him to ſpeak. Finding him ſilent, ſhe begins to rub her hand, and look at it affectedly.*)

Liv. It is not a boy's hand, Baron de Bertrand: 'tis the hand of a weak fooliſh woman, which ſhall be given to a lover of hers who is not much wiſer than herſelf, whenever he has courage to aſk it.

Walt. (*aſide, jogging* Ant.) That is thyſelf: doſt thou not apprehend her, Man?

Liv. (*ſtill looking at her hand*) Even ſo; whenever he has courage to aſk it. That, I ſuppoſe, may happen in about five or ſix years from this preſent time.

Ant. (*running up to her, catching her hand, and putting his knee to the ground*) Now, now, dear Livia! O that I could utter what I feel! — I am a fool ſtill; — I cannot.

Liv. Nothing you can poſſibly ſay will make me more ſenſible of your generous worth, or more aſhamed of my former injuſtice to it.

(*All crowd round* Ant. *and* Liv. *to congratulate them, when the* Counteſs *is heard ſpeaking angrily without.*)

Dart. We muſt pay our compliments another time; I fear there is a ſtorm ready to burſt upon us.

Enter Counteſs.

Counteſs. Yes, Gentlemen; I have heard of your plot, as you call it; a diabolical conſpiracy for debaſing the merit you envy. I deſpiſe you all: you are beneath my anger.

Walt. Let us eſcape it then.

Counteſs. (*to* Walt.) Aye, ſnarling Cynic! who haſt always a prick of thy adder's tongue to beſtow upon every one whom the world admires or careſſes; thou art the wicked mover of all theſe contrivances. (*To the* Bar.) As for you, poor antiquated *Rhime-maker*! had I but continued to praiſe your verſes, you would have ſuffered me to ruin your whole kindred very quietly; nor had one ſingle grain of compunction diſturbed the ſweet calm of your gratified vanity.

Bar. Nay, Madam; I cannot charge my memory with any interruption of your goodneſs,

in this reſpect, to my face: had you been as perſeveringly obliging behind my back, we might indeed have remained longer friends than would have been entirely for the intereſts of my heir.

Counteſs. Well, well; may every urchin of the principality learn by rote ſome ſcrap of your poetry, and mouth it at you as often as you ſtir abroad! (*To* Liv.) And you, Madam; you are here, too, amongſt this worſhipful divan! This is your hoſpitality — your delicacy — your —— O! may you wed a tyrant for your pains, and theſe walls prove your odious priſon! — But I ſpend my words vainly: where is the unhappy victim of your envious malevolence? They told me he was here. (*Diſcovering* Vald. *and* Nina *retired to the bottom of the ſtage*) Ha! you *are* here, patiently enduring their triumph, degenerate Boy! Is this the fruit of all my cares? Did I procure for you a military appointment, did I teaſe every creature connected with me for your promotion, did I ruin myſelf for your extravagant martial equipments — and has it all come to this?

Vald. You put me into the army, Madam, to pleaſe your own vanity; and they who thruſt their ſons into it for that purpoſe, are not always gratified.

Counteſs. And you anſwer me thus! I have ſpoilt you, indeed; and an indulged child, I find, does not always prove a dutiful one. Who is that you hold by the hand?

Vald. My wife, Madam.

Countefs. Your wife! You do not fay fo: you dare not fay fo. Have they impofed a wife upon you alfo? Let go her unworthy hand.

Vald. No, Madam; never. It is my hand that is unworthy to hold fo much innocent affection.

Countefs. You are diftracted: let go her hand, or I renounce you for ever. — What, will you not?

Vald. I will not.

Countefs. Thou can'ft be fturdy, I find, only for thine own ruin. They have confounded and bewildered thee: thou haft joined the confpiracy againft thyfelf, and thy poor mother. — O, I could hate thee more than them all! — Heaven grant me patience!

Walt. I like to hear people pray for what they really want.

Countefs. Infolent! Heaven grant you what you need not pray for, the deteftation of every one annoyed with your peftiferous fociety.

[EXIT *in rage.*

Dart. Let us be thankful this tornado is over, and the hurry of an eventful day and night fo happily concluded. — I hope, charming Livia, you forgive our deceit, and regret not its confequences.

Liv. The only thing to be regretted, Chevalier, is the wound you have received.

Dart. Thank God! this, though but flight, is the only harm that has been done to-night,

a broken pate or two excepted; and our feigned attack upon the caſtle has been providentially the means of defending it from a real one. Had not Antonio, however, who was not in our plot, come ſo opportunely to our aid, we had been beaten.—But now that I have time to enquire, how did'ſt thou come ſo opportunely?

Ant. I have been in the habit of wandering after dark round the walls. Livia knows not how many nights I have watched the light gleaming from the window of her chamber. Wandering then, as uſual, I diſcovered a corps of the enemy on their march to the caſtle, and went immediately for ſuccour, which I fortunately found. We have both fought ſtoutly, my Friend, with our little force; but the blows have fallen to your ſhare, and the bleſſing to mine.

Dart. Not ſo; friends keep not their ſhares ſo diſtinctly.

Liv. True, Chevalier; and you claim, beſides, whatever ſatisfaction you may have from the gratitude of this good company, for contriving a plot that has ended ſo fortunately.

Dart. Nay, there is, I fear, one perſon in this good company, from whom my claims, of this kind, are but ſmall.—Count Valdemere, can you forgive me?

Vald. Aſk me not at preſent, Dartz. I know that my conduct to Antonio did deſerve correction; but you have taken a revenge for him with mercileſs ſeverity, which he would

himſelf have been too generous, too noble to have taken.

Dart. Well, Count, I confeſs I ſtand ſomewhat reproved and conſcience-ſtricken before you.

Walt. (*to* Dart.) Why, truly, if he forgive thee, or any of us, by this day twelve-month, it will be as much as we can reaſonably expect.

Dart. Be it ſo! And now we have all pardon to aſk, where, I hope, it will be granted immediately. (*Bowing to the audience.*)

THE END.

THE BEACON:

A SERIOUS MUSICAL DRAMA,

IN TWO ACTS.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

ULRICK, *Lord of the Iſland.*
ERMINGARD.
BASTIANI, *Friend of* Ulrick.
GARCIO, *Friend of* Ermingard.
Page.
Pope's Legate.
Knights of St. John of Jeruſalem.
Fiſhermen, Singers, Attendants of the Legate, &c.

WOMEN.

AURORA.
TERENTIA, *a noble Lady and Governante to* Aurora.
VIOLA, EDDA, } *Ladies attending on* Aurora.

Scene, *a ſmall Iſland of the Mediterranean.*

Time, *towards the middle of the* 14*th Century.*

THE BEACON.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Grove adjoining to a caſtellated Building, part of which only is ſeen. Several People are diſcovered near the Window of one of its Towers, who begin to ſing as the Curtain draws up.*

Song of feveral voices.

UP! quit thy bower, late wears the hour;
Long have the rooks caw'd round thy tower;
On flower and tree, loud hums the bee;
The wilding kid ſports merrily:
A day ſo bright, ſo freſh, ſo clear,
Shineth when good fortune's near.

Up! Lady fair, and braid thy hair,
And rouze thee in the breezy air;
The lulling ſtream, that ſooth'd thy dream,
Is dancing in the ſunny beam;
And hours ſo ſweet, ſo bright, ſo gay,
Will waft good fortune on its way.

Up! time will tell; the friar's bell
Its ſervice-ſound hath chimed well;

The aged crone keeps house alone,
And reapers to the fields are gone;
The active day so boon and bright,
May bring good fortune ere the night.

Enter Page.

Page. Leave off your morning songs, they
come too late;
My Lady hath been up these two good hours,
And hath no heart to listen to your lays;
You should have cheer'd her sooner.

1st Sing. Her nightly vigils make the ev'ning
morn,
And thus we reckon'd time.

Page. Well, go ye now;
Another day she'll hear your carols out.

(EXEUNT Page *and* Singers *severally, by the bottom of the stage, while* ULRICK *and* TERENTIA *enter by the front, speaking as they enter.*)

Ul. Thou plead'st in vain: this night shall be
the last.

Ter. Have patience, noble Ulrick; be assur'd,
Hope, lacking nourishment, if left alone,
Comes to a natural end. Then let Aurora,
Night after night, upon the lofty cliff,
Her beacon watch: despondency, ere long,
Will steal upon the sad unvaried task.

Ul. Sad and unvaried! Aye; to sober minds
So doth it seem indeed. I've seen a child,
Day after day, to his dead hedgeling bring
The wonted mess, prepar'd against its waking,

'Till from its putrid breaſt each feather dropt:
Or on the edge of a clear ſtream hold out
His rod and baitleſs line from morn till noon,
Eyeing the ſpotted trout, that paſt his ſnare
A thouſand times hath glided, till by force
His angry Dame hath dragg'd him from his ſtation.
Hope is of ſuch a tough continuous nature,
That, waiting thus its natural end, my life
Shall to an end wear ſadly. Patience, ſay'ſt thou!
I have too long been patient.

Ter. Then, be it known to thee, deſpondency
Already ſteals upon her; for ſhe ſits not
So oft' as ſhe was wont upon the beach,
But in her chamber keeps in ſombre ſilence;
And when the night is come, leſs eagerly
She now enquires if yet the beacon's light
Peer down the woody paſs, that to the cliff
Nightly conducts her toilſome ſteps. I gueſs,
Soon of her own accord, ſhe'll watch no more.

Ul. No, thou unwiſely gueſſeſt. By that flame
I do believe ſome ſpirit of the night
Comes to her myſtic call, and ſoothes her ear
With whiſper'd prophecies of good to come.

Ter. In truth, my Lord, you do yourſelf talk ſtrangely;
Theſe are wild thoughts.

Ul. Nay, be thou well aſſur'd,
Spell-bound ſhe is: night hath become her day:

On all wild ſongs, and ſounds, and ominous
things,
(Shunning the ſober intercourſe of friends
Such as affliction courts,) her ear and fancy
Do ſolely dwell. This viſionary ſtate
Is foſter'd by theſe nightly watchings; there-
fore,
I ſay again, I will no more endure it;
This night ſhall be the laſt.
Ter. That Ermingard upon the plains of
Paleſtine
Fell on that fatal day, what ſober mind
Can truly doubt; altho' his corpſe, defaced,
Or hid by other ſlain, was ne'er diſcover'd.
For, well I am aſſur'd, had he ſurvived it,
Knowing thou wer't his rival, and Aurora
Left in this iſle, where thou bear'ſt ſov'reign
ſway,
He, with a lover's ſpeed, had haſten'd back.
All, whom the havoc of the battle ſpared,
Have to their homes return'd.——Thou ſhak'ſt
thy head,
Thou doſt not doubt?
Ul. We'll ſpeak of this no more.
I'm ſick and weary of theſe calculations.
We muſt and will conſider him as dead;
And let Aurora know———

Enter BASTIANI.

(*To* Baſt. *angrily*) Why, Baſtiani,
Intrud'ſt thou thus regardleſs of my ſtate?

Theſe petty cares are grown moſt irkſome to me;
I cannot hear thee now.

Baſt. Indeed, my Lord, it is no petty care
Compels me to intrude. Within your port
A veſſel from the holy land has moor'd.

Ul. (*ſtarting*) Warriors from Paleſtine?

Baſt. No, good my Lord!
The holy legate on his way to Rome;
Who, by late tempeſts driven on our coaſts,
Means here his ſhatter'd pinnace to refit,
And give refreſhment to his weary train.

Ul. In evil hour he comes to lord it here.

Baſt. He doth appear a meek and peaceful man.

Ul. 'Tis ſeeming all. I would with mailed foes
Far rather in th' embattled plain contend
Than ſtrive with ſuch my peaceful town within.
Already landed ſay'ſt thou?

Baſt. Yes, from the beach their grave proceſſion comes.
Between our gazing ſight and the bright deep,
That glows behind them in the weſtern ſun,
Croſſes and ſpears and croziers ſhew aloft
Their darken'd ſpikes, in moſt diſtinct confuſion;
While grey-cowl'd monks, and purple-ſtoled prieſts,
And creſted chiefs a cloſing group below,
Motley and gariſh, yet right ſolemn too,
Move ſlowly on. ———

Ul. Then muſt I haſte to meet them.

Baſt. Or be moſt ſtrangely wanting in reſpect.

For every ſtreet and alley of your city,
Its eager ſwarm pours forth to gaze upon them.
The very ſick and dying, whoſe wan cheeks
No more did think to meet the breath of heaven,
Creep to their doors, and ſtretch their wither'd arms
To catch a benediction. Bluſhing maids,
Made bold by inward ſenſe of ſanctity,
Come forth with threaded roſeries in their hands
To have them by the holy prelate bleſs'd;
And mothers hold their wond'ring infants up,
That touch of paſſing cowl or ſacred robe
May bring them good. — And in fair truth, my Lord,
Amongſt the crowd the rev'rend legate ſeems
Like a right noble and right gentle parent
Cheering a helpleſs race.

Ul. Aye, 'tis right plain thou art beſotted too.
Were he leſs gentle, I ſhould fear him leſs.

[Exit.

Baſt. He's in a bleſſed mood: what ſo diſturbs him?

Ter. What has diſturb'd him long, as well thou knoweſt:

Aurora's perſevering fond belief,
That her beloved Ermingard ſtill lives
And will return again. To guide his bark
Upon our dang'rous coaſt ſhe nightly kindles
Her watch-fire, ſitting by the lonely flame;

For ſo ſhe promiſed, when he parted from her,
To watch for his return.

Baſt. Ulrick in wiſdom ſhould have married them
Before he went, for then the chance had been
She had not watch'd ſo long. ———
Your widow is a thing of more docility
Than your lorn maiden.—Pardon, fair Terentia.

Ter. Thy tongue wags freely. — Yet, I muſt confeſs,
Had Ulrick done what thou call'ſt wiſely, he
The very thing had done which as her kinſman
He was in duty bound to. — But alas!
A wayward paſſion warp'd him from the right,
And made him uſe his power ungen'rouſly
Their union to prevent.

Baſt. But tho' the death of Ermingard were proved,
Think'ſt thou Aurora would beſtow her hand
On one who has ſo long her wiſhes croſs'd;
A lover cloth'd in ſtern authority?

Ter. I know not; Ulrick fondly ſo believes;
And I, altho' allied to him by blood,
The play-mate alſo of his early days,
Dare not an oppoſite opinion utter.

Baſt. Hark there! I hear without th' approaching crowd.
My duty on this public ceremony
I muſt attend, for honour of the ſtate.
In petty courts like this, on ſuch occaſions,
One ſpangled doublet more or leſs bears count.

[EXEUNT *ſeverally.*

SCENE II.

An Arbour ſupported by ruſtic wooden Pillars, twined round with Flowers and green Plants, and a Flower Garden ſeen in the back Ground between the Pillars. Enter Page, *followed by* Edda, *ſpeaking as ſhe enters.*

Ed. Yes, do ſo, Boy; Aurora is at hand. —
But take with thee, beſides, this little baſket,
And gather roſes in the farther thicket,
Cloſe to the garden gate. ——

Page. (*taking the baſket*)
Give it me then. She chid me yeſterday
For gath'ring full-ſpread roſes, whoſe looſe leaves
Fell on her lap: to day I'll fill my baſket
With buds, and budlings, and half-open'd flowers,
Such as nice dames do in their kerchiefs place.

Ed. Prate leſs and move thee quicker. Get thee hence.
See there thy miſtreſs comes: haſte to thy taſk.

[Exit Page.

Enter Aurora *and* Terentia.

Ter. Here you will find a more refreſhing air;
The weſtern ſun beats fiercely.

Aur. Weſtern ſun!
Is time ſo far advanced? I left my couch
Scarcely an hour ago.

Ter. You are deceived.
Three hours have paſt, but paſt by you unheeded;

Who have the while in ſilent ſtillneſs ſat,
Like one forlorn, that has no need of time.

Aur. In truth I now but little have to do
With time or any thing beſides. It paſſes;
Hour follows hour; day follows day; and year,
If I ſo long ſhall laſt, will follow year:
Like drops that thro' the cavern'd hermit's roof
Some cold ſpring filters; glancing on his eye
At meaſured intervals, but moving not
His fix'd unvaried notice.

Ed. Nay, deareſt Lady, be not ſo depreſs'd.
You have not aſk'd me for my ſong to day —
The ſong you prais'd ſo much. Shall I not ſing it?
I do but wait your bidding.

Aur. I thank thy kindneſs; ſing it if thou wilt.

(*Sits down on a low ſeat, her head ſupported between both her hands, with her elbows reſting on her knees.*)

SONG.

WHERE diſtant billows meet the ſky,
A pale dull light the ſeamen ſpy,
As ſpent they ſtand and tempeſt-toſt,
Their veſſel ſtruck, their rudder loſt;
While diſtant homes where kinſmen weep,
And graves full many a fathom deep,
By turns their fitful, gloomy thoughts pourtray:
" *'Tis ſome deluſion of the ſight,*
Some northern ſtreamer's paly light."
" *Fools!*" *ſaith rous'd Hope with gen'rous ſcorn,*
" *It is the bleſſed peep of morn,*
And aid and ſafety come when comes the day."

And ſo it is ; the gradual ſhine
Spreads o'er heaven's verge its lengthen'd line :
Cloud after cloud begins to glow
And tint the changeful deep below ;
Now ſombre red, now amber bright,
Till upward breaks the blazing light ;
Like floating fire the gleamy billows burn :
Far diſtant on the ruddy tide,
A black'ning ſail is ſeen to glide ;
Loud burſts their eager joyful cry,
Their hoiſted ſignal waves on high,
And life and ſtrength and happy thoughts return.

Ter. Is not her voice improved in power and ſweetneſs ?

Ed. It is a cheering ſong.

Aur. It cheers thoſe who are cheer'd.
(*After a pauſe.*)
Twelve years are paſt ;
Their daughters matrons grown, their infants youths,
And they themſelves with aged furrows mark'd ;
But none of all their kin are yet return'd,
No, nor ſhall ever.

Ter. Still run thy thoughts upon thoſe hapleſs women
Of that ſmall hamlet, whoſe advent'rous peaſants
To Paleſtine with noble Baldwin went,
And ne'er were heard of more ?

Aur. They periſh'd there ; and of their diſmal fate
No trace remain'd — none of them all return'd.

Did'ſt thou not ſay ſo? — Huſbands, lovers, friends, —
Not one return'd again.
Ter. So I believe. ———
Aur. Thou but believeſt then?
Ter. As I was told ———
Ed. Thou haſt the ſtory wrong.
Four years gone by, one did return again;
But marr'd and maim'd and changed, — a woeful man.
Aur. And what tho' every limb were hack'd and maim'd,
And roughen'd o'er with ſcars? — he did return.
(*Riſing lightly from her ſeat.*)
I would a pilgrimage to Iceland go,
To the Antipodes or burning zone
To ſee that man, who did return again,
And her, who did receive him. — Did receive him!
O what a moving thought lurks here! — How was't?
Tell it me all: and oh, another time,
Give me your tale ungarbled. —

Enter VIOLA.

Ha! Viola! 'tis my firſt ſight of thee
Since our long vigil. Thou haſt had, I hope,
A ſound and kindly ſleep. ——
Viol. Kindly enough, but ſomewhat croſs'd with dreams.

Aur. How croſſ'd? What was thy dream? O tell it me!
I have an ear that craves for every thing
That hath the ſmalleſt ſign or omen in it.
It was not ſad?

Viol. Nay, rather ſtrange; Methought
A chriſt'ning feaſt within your bower was held;
But when the infant to the font was brought,
It proved a full-grown man, in armour clad.

Aur. A full-grown man! (*conſidering for a moment, and then holding up her hands*) O bleſſing on thy dream!
From death to life reſtor'd is joyful birth.
It is, it is! Come to my heart, ſweet Maid!
(*Embracing* Viola.)
A bleſſing on thyſelf and on thy ſleep!
I feel a kindling life within me ſtir,
That doth aſſure me it has ſhadow'd forth
A joy that ſoon ſhall be.

Ter. So may it prove!
But truſt not ſuch vain fancies, nor appear
Too much elated; for unhappy Ulrick
Swears that your Beacon, after this night's watch,
Shall burn no more.

Aur. He does! Then will we have
A noble fire. This night out lofty blaze
Shall thro' the darkneſs ſhoot full many a league
Its ſtreamy rays, like to a bearded ſtar

Preceding changeful — aye, and better times.
It may in very truth. — O if his bark
(For many a bark within its widen'd reach
The dark ſeas traverſe) ſhould its light deſcry!
Should this be ſo — it may; perhaps it will.
O that it might! — We'll have a rouſing blaze!
Give me your hands. (*Taking* Viola *and* Terentia *gaily by the hands.*)
So lightly bounds my heart,
I could like midnight goblins round the flame
Unruly orgies hold. —— Ha! think ye not,
When to the font our mail-clad infant comes,
Ulrick will a right gracious goſſip prove?
Nay, nay, Terentia, look not ſo demure,
I needs muſt laugh. ————

Ter. Indeed you let your fancy wildly run;
And diſappointment will the ſharper be.

Aur. Talk not of diſappointment: be aſſur'd
Some late intelligence doth Ulrick prompt
To theſe ſtern orders. On our ſea there ſails,
Or ſoon will ſail, ſome veſſel which right gladly
He would permit to founder on the coaſt,
Or miſs its courſe. But no; it will not be:
In ſpite of all his hatred, to the ſhore,
Thro' ſeas as dark as ſubterraneous night
It will arrive in ſafety.

Ter. Nay, ſweet Aurora, feed not thus thy wiſhes
With wild unlikely thoughts; for Ulrick ſurely
No ſuch intelligence hath had, and thou
But mak'ſt thy after-ſorrow more acute
When theſe vain fancies fail.

Aur. And let them fail! Tho' duller thoughts
succeed,
The bliſs e'en of a moment, ſtill is bliſs.
Viol. (*to* Ter.) Thou would'ſt not of her dew-
drops ſpoil the thorn
Becauſe her glory will not laſt till noon;
Nor ſtill the lightſome gambols of the colt,
Whoſe neck to-morrow's yoke will gall. Fye
on't!
If this be wife, 'tis cruel. ——
Aur. Thanks, gentle Viola! Thou art ever
kind.
We'll think to-morrow ſtill hath good in ſtore,
And make of this a bleſſing for to-day,
Tho' good Terentia there may chide us for it.
Ter. And thus, a profitable life you'll lead,
Which hath no preſent time, but is made up
Entirely of to-morrows.
Aur. Well, taunt me as thou wilt, I'll worſhip
ſtill
The bleſſed morrow, ſtore-houſe of all good
For wretched folks. They who lament to-day,
May then rejoice: They who in miſery bend
E'en to the earth, be then in honour robed.
O! who ſhall reckon what its brighten'd hours
May of returning joy contain? To-morrow!
The bleſt to-morrow! Cheering, kind to-morrow!
I were a heathen not to worſhip thee.
(*To* Ter.) Frown not again; we muſt not
wrangle now.
Ter. Thou doſt ſuch vain and fooliſh fancies
cheriſh;
Thou forceſt me to ſeem unkind and ſtern.

Aur. Ah! be not ſtern. Edda will ſing the ſong
That makes feet beat and heads nod to its tune;
And even grave Terentia will be moved
To think of pleaſant things.

SONG.

WISH'D-FOR gales the light vane veering,
Better dreams the dull night cheering;
Lighter heart the morning greeting,
Things of better omen meeting;
Eyes each paſſing ſtranger watching,
Ears each feeble rumour catching,
Say he exiſteth ſtill on earthly ground,
The abſent will return, the long, long loſt be found.

In the tower the ward-bell ringing,
In the court the carols ſinging;
Buſy hands the gay board dreſſing,
Eager ſteps the threſhold preſſing,
Open'd arms in haſte advancing,
Joyful looks thro' blind tears glancing;
The gladſome bounding of his aged hound,
Say he in truth is here, our long, long loſt is found.

Hymned thanks and beedſmen praying,
With ſheath'd ſword the urchin playing;
Blazon'd hall with torches burning,
Cheerful morn in peace returning;
Converſe ſweet that ſtrangely borrows
Preſent bliſs from former ſorrows,
O who can tell each bleſſed ſight and ſound,
That ſays, he with us bides, our long, long loſt is ſound.

Aur. (*who at firſt nods her head lightly to the meaſure, now burſts into tears, taking* Edda's *hand between hers and preſſing them gratefully.*)

I thank thee; this ſhall be our daily ſong.
It cheers my heart, altho' theſe fooliſh tears
Seem to diſgrace its ſweetneſs.

Enter Page.

Viol. (*to* Aur.) Here comes your Page with lightly bounding ſteps
As if he brought good tidings.

Ed. Grant he may!

Aur. (*eagerly*) What brings thee hither, Boy!

Page. (*to* Aur.) A noble ſtranger of the Legate's train,
Come from the holy land, doth wait without,
Near to the garden gate, where I have left him,
He begs to be admitted to your preſence;
Pleading for ſuch indulgence as the friend
Of Ermingard; for ſo he bade me ſay.

Aur. The friend of Ermingard! The holy land!

(*Pauſing for a moment, and then toſſing up her arms in ecſtaſy.*)

O God! It is himſelf!

(*Runs eagerly ſome ſteps towards the garden, then catching hold of* Terentia, *who follows her*)

My head is dizzy grown; I cannot go.
Haſte, lead him hither, Boy.

(*Waving her hand impatiently*)

Fly; hear'ſt thou not? [Exit Page.

Ter. Be not ſo greatly mov'd. It is not likely
This ſhould be Ermingard. The boy has ſeen him,
And would have known him. 'Tis belike ſome friend.

Aur. No; every thrilling fibre of my frame
Cries out "It is himſelf." (*Looking out.*)
He comes not yet; how ſtrange! how dull! how tardy!

Ter. Your Page hath ſcarce had time to reach the gate,
Tho' he hath run right quickly.

Aur. (*pauſing and looking out*)
He comes not yet. Ah! if it be not he,
My ſinking heart miſgives me.
O now he comes! the ſize and air are his.

Ter. Not to my fancy: there is no reſemblance.

Aur. Nay but there is. And ſee, he wears his cloak
As he was wont to do; and o'er his cap
The ſhading plume ſo hangs. — It is! it is!
(*Enter* Garcio, *and ſhe, breaking from* Terentia, *runs towards him.*)
My loſt, my found, my bleſt! conceal thee not.
(*Going to catch him in her arms, when* Garcio *takes off his plumed cap and bows profoundly: ſhe utters a faint cry, and ſhrinks back.*)

Gar. Lady, I ſee this doff'd cap hath diſcover'd

A face leſs welcome than the one you look'd for.
Pardon a ſtranger's preſence; I've preſumed
Thus to intrude, as friend of Ermingard,
Who bade me ———

Aur. Bade thee! is he then at hand?

Gar. Ah, would he were!
'Twas in a hoſtile and a diſtant land,
He did commit to me theſe precious tokens,
Deſiring me to give them to Aurora,
And with them too, his ſad and laſt farewel.

Aur. And he is dead!

Gar. Nay, wring not thus your hands:
He was alive and well when he entruſted me
With what I now return.

(*Offering her a ſmall caſket.*)

Aur. Alive and well, and ſends me back my tokens!

Gar. He ſent them back to thee as Ulrick's wife;
For ſuch, forc'd by intelligence from hence
Of ſtrong authority, he did believe thee:
And in that fatal fight, which ſhortly follow'd,
He fought for death as ſhrewdly as for fame.
Fame he indeed hath earn'd.

Aur. But not the other?
Ah do not ſay he has! Amongſt the ſlain
His body was not found.

Gar. As we have learnt the Knights of bleſt St. John
Did from the field of dying and of wounded
Many convey, who in their houſe of charity
All care and ſolace had; but with the names,

Recorded as within their walls receiv'd,
His is not found; therefore we muſt account him
With thoſe, who, ſhrouded in an unknown fate,
Are as the dead lamented, as the dead,
For ever from our worldly care diſmiſſ'd.

Aur. Lamented he ſhall be; but from my care
Diſmiſſ'd as are the dead — that is impoſſible.

Ter. Nay, liſten to advice ſo wiſe and needful:
It is the friend of Ermingard who ſays,
Let him within thy mind be as the dead.

Aur. My heart repels the thought: it cannot be.
No; till his corſe bereft of life is found;
Till this is ſworn, and prov'd, and witneſſ'd to me,
Within my breaſt he ſhall be living ſtill.

Ter. Wilt thou yet vainly watch night after night
To guide his bark who never will return?

Aur. Who never will return! And thinkeſt thou
To bear me down with ſuch preſumptuous words?
Heaven makes me ſtrong againſt thee.
There is a Power above, that calms the ſtorm;
Reſtrains the mighty; gives the dead to life:—
I will in humble faith my watch ſtill keep;
Force only ſhall reſtrain me.

Gar. Force never ſhall, thou noble, ardent Spirit!
Thy gen'rous confidence would almoſt tempt me
To think it will be juſtified.

Aur. Ha! ſay'ſt thou ſo? A bleſſing reſt upon thee

For theſe moſt cheering words! Some guardian power
Whiſpers within thee.——No; we'll not deſpair.

Enter Ulrick.

Ul. (*to* Gar.) Your diſmal miſſion is, I truſt, fulfill'd;
Then, gentle Garcio, deem it not unkind
That I entreat you to retire; for they
Who ſorrow for the dead love to be left
To grieve without conſtraint.

Aur. Thanks for your kind concern, moſt noble Sir:
And, when we needs muſt ſorrow for the dead,
We'll freely grieve without conſtraint. But know
Until our corſe is found, we ring no knell.
If then your ear for funeral dirges long,
Go to ſome other bower; hope ſtill is here.

Ul. Ha! ſtill perverſely bent! what can convince thee?
This is diſtraction.

Aur. Be it what it may,
It owns not thy authority. Brave Youth, (*to* Gar.)
I owe thy gentleneſs ſome kind acknowledgment.
I'll find another time to give thee thanks.

[Exit, *followed by* Viol. *and* Ed.

Ul. Such hope is madneſs; yield we to her humour?
No; ſhe muſt be to ſober reaſon brought
By ſteady, firm controul.

Gar. Mean you by this, my Lord, a forc'd controul?

Ul. Who ſhall enquire my meaning?

Gar. The holy Legate, patron of th' oppreſſ'd,
Will venture to enquire.

Ul. Aye, as his nephew, thou preſumeſt, I ſee.
But know, bold Youth, I am unuſed to threats.

Gar. Yet brook them as you may. I take my leave. [EXIT.

Manent Ulrick *and* Terentia.

Ul. Did I not ſay theſe curſed meddling prieſts —
Theſe men of meekneſs, whereſoe'er they come,
Would rule and power uſurp? Woe worth the hour
That brought them here! — And for this headſtrong maniac
As ſuch, I will ——

Ter. Huſh, huſh! theſe precincts quit.
It is not well, here to expoſe to view
Thy weak ungovern'd paſſions. Thou'rt obſerved;
Retire with me, where ſkreen'd from every eye,
With more poſſeſſion of thy ruffled mind,
Thou may'ſt conſider of thy wayward ſtate.

[EXEUNT.

ACT II.

SCENE. I. — *A flat Spot of Ground on the top of a Cliff, with broken craggy Rocks on each Side, and a large maſs of Rock in the middle, on which a great Fire of Wood is burning; a dark Sea in the back Ground: the Scene to receive no Light but from the Fire. Two Fiſhermen are diſcovered watching the Fire, and ſupplying it with Wood.*

SONG.

Firſt Fiſherman.

" *HIGH is the tower, and the watch-dogs bay,*
And the ſlitting owlets ſhriek;
I ſee thee wave thy mantle grey,
But I cannot hear thee ſpeak.

" *O, are they from the eaſt or weſt*
The tidings he bears to me?
Or from the land that I love beſt,
From the knight of the north countree?"

Swift down the winding ſtair ſhe ruſh'd,
Like a guſt of the ſummer wind;
Her ſteps were light, her breath was huſh'd,
And ſhe dared not look behind.

She paſt by ſtealth the narrow door,
The poſtern way alſo,
And thought each buſh her robe that tore,
The graſp of a warding foe.

And ſhe has climb'd the moat ſo ſteep,
With chilly dread and fear,
While th' evening fly humm'd dull and deep,
Like a wardman whiſp'ring near.

" *Now, who art thou, thou Palmer tall,*
Who beckoneſt ſo to me?
Art thou from that dear and diſtant hall?
Art thou from the north countree?"

He rais'd his hood with wary wile,
That cover'd his raven hair,
And a manlier face and a ſweeter ſmile
Ne'er greeted lady fair.

" *My coal-black ſteed feeds in the brake,*
Of gen'rous blood and true;
He'll ſoon the neareſt frontier make,
Let they who liſt purſue.

" *Thy pale cheek ſhows an alter'd mind,*
Thine eye the blinding tear;
Come not with me if aught behind
Is to thy heart more dear.

" *Thy ſire and dame are in that hall,*
Thy friend, thy mother's ſon;
Come not with me, if one o'them all
E'er loved thee as I have done."

The lady mounted the coal-black ſteed,
Behind her knight I ween,
And they have paſs'd thro' brake and mead,
And plain, and woodland green.

But hark, behind! the warders ſhout,
And the haſty larums ring;
And the mingled ſound of a gath'ring rout
The paſſing air doth bring.

" *O noble ſteed! now 'quit thee well,*
And prove thy gen'rous kind!
That fearful ſound doth louder ſwell,
It is not far behind.

" *The frontier's near — a ſpan the plain,*
Preſs on and do not fail!
Ah! on our ſteps fell horſemen gain,
I hear their ringing mail."

2d Fiſh. Tuſh, man! give o'er; thy ballads have no end,
When thou art in the mood. I hear below
A ſound of many voices on the ſhore:
Some boat, belike, forced by the drifting current
Upon the rocks, may be in jeopardy.

1ſt Fiſh. 'Tis all a mock to cut my ditty ſhort.
Thou haſt no mind to hear how it befel
That thoſe two lovers were by kinſman ſtern
O'erta'en; and how the knight, by armed foes
Befet, a bloody combat bravely held,
And was the while robb'd of his lady fair.
And how in Paynim land they met again.
How, as a Page diſguiſed, ſhe fought her knight,
Left on the field as lifeleſs. How ſhe cheer'd him;
And how they married were, and home in ſtate ——

2d. Fiſh. Ha' done, ha' done! a hundred
times I've heard it.
My Grandam lull'd me with it on her lap
Full many a night; and as my father ſat,
Mending his nets upon the beach, he ſung it.
I would I knew my prayers as well.—But hark!
I hear a noiſe again. ——

(*Goes to the bottom of the ſtage, as if he were looking down to the ſea.*)

Along the ſhore
I ſee lights moving ſwiftly.

1ſt Fiſh. Some fiſhermen, who, later than the
reſt,
Their crazy boat bring in; while, to the beach,
With flaming brands, their wives and children
run.
Rare ſight, indeed, to take thy fancy ſo!

(*Sings again.*)

No fiſh ſtir in our heaving net,
And the ſky is dark, and the night is wet;
And we muſt ply the luſty oar,
For the tide is ebbing from the ſhore;
And ſad are they whoſe faggots burn,
So kindly ſtored for our return.

Our boat is ſmall and the tempeſt raves,
And nought is heard but the laſhing waves,
And the ſullen roar of the angry ſea,
And the wild winds piping drearily;
Yet ſea and tempeſt riſe in vain,
We'll bleſs our blazing hearths again.

Puſh bravely, Mates! Our guiding ſtar
Now from its towerlet ſtreameth far;
And now along the nearing ſtrand,
See, ſwiftly moves yon flaming brand:
Before the midnight watch is paſt,
We'll quaff our bowl and mock the blaſt.

Baſt. (*without*)
Holla, good Mate! Thou who ſo bravely ſing'ſt!
Come down, I pray thee.

1ſt Fiſh. Who art thou who call'ſt?

2d Fiſh. I know the voice; 'tis Sign'or Baſtiani.

1ſt Fiſh. What! he, at ſuch an hour, upon the cliff!
(*Calling down*) I cannot come. If, from my ſtation here,
This fire untended, I were found; good ſooth!
I had as lief the luckleſs friar be,
Who ſpilt the Abbot's wine.

2d Fiſh. I'll go to him. [EXIT.

1ſt Fiſh. (*muttering to himſelf*)
Aye; leave my watch, indeed! a rare entreaty!

Enter BASTIANI.

Baſt. Wilt thou not go? A boat near to the ſhore,
In a moſt perilous ſtate, calls for aſſiſtance:
Who is like thee, good Stephen, bold and ſkilful?
Haſte to its aid, if there be pity in thee,
Or any Chriſtian grace. I will, meantime,

Thy beacon watch; and, ſhould the lady come,
Excuſe thy abſence. Haſte; make no reply.

1ſt Fiſh. I will; God help us all! [Exit.

Baſt. Here is, indeed, a ſplendid noble fire
Left me in ward. It makes the darkneſs round,
To its fierce light oppos'd, ſeem thick and palpable,
And clos'd o'er head, like to the pitchy cope
Of ſome vaſt cavern. —— Near at hand, methinks,
Soft female voices ſpeak: I'll to my ſtation.
(*Retires from the front of the ſtage behind the fire.*)

Enter AURORA, TERENTIA *and* VIOLA.

Viol. A rouſing light! Good Stephen hath full well
Obey'd your earneſt bidding. — Fays and witches
Might round its blaze their midnight revelry
Right fitly keep.

Ter. Aye; thou lov'ſt wilds and darkneſs,
And fire and ſtorms, and things unſooth and ſtrange:
This ſuits thee well. Methinks, in gazing on it,
Thy face a witch-like eagerneſs aſſumes.

Viol. I'll be a goblin then, and round it dance.
Did not Aurora ſay we thus ſhould hold
This nightly vigil. Yea, ſuch were her words.

Aur. They were light bubbles of ſome mantling thought,
That now is flat and ſpiritleſs; and yet,
If thou art ſo inclined, aſk not my leave,
Dance if thou wilt.

Viol. Nay, not alone, ſweet ſooth!
Witches, themſelves, ſome fiend-like partners find.

Ter. And ſo may'ſt thou. Look yonder; near the flame
A creſted figure ſtands. That is not Stephen.

Aur. (*eagerly*) A creſted figure! Where? O call to it!

(Baſt. *comes forward.*)

Ter. 'Tis Baſtiani.

Aur. Aye; 'tis Baſtiani:
'Tis he, or any one; 'tis ever thus;
So is my fancy mock'd.

Baſt. If I offend you, Madam, 'tis unwillingly.
Stephen has for a while gone to the beach
To help ſome fiſhermen, who, as I gueſs,
Againſt the tide would force their boat to land.
He'll ſoon return; meantime, I did entreat him
To let me watch his Beacon. Pardon me;
I had not elſe intruded; tho' full oft
I've clamber'd o'er theſe cliffs, ev'n at this hour,
To ſee the ocean from its fabled breaſt
The flickering gleam of theſe bright flames return.

Aur. Make no excuſe, I pray thee. I am told
By good Terentia thou doſt wiſh me well,
Tho' Ulrick long has been thy friend. I know
A wanderer on the ſeas in early youth
Thou waſt, and ſtill can'ſt feel for all ſtorm-toſs'd
On that rude element.

Baſt. 'Tis true, fair Lady: I have been, ere now,
Where ſuch a warning light, ſent from the ſhore,
Had ſaved ſome precious lives; which makes the taſk,
I now fulfil, more grateful.

Aur. How many leagues from ſhore may ſuch a light
By the benighted mariner be ſeen?

Baſt. Some ſix or ſo, he will deſcry it faintly,
Like a ſmall ſtar, or hermit's taper, peering
From ſome cav'd rock that brows the dreary waſte;
Or like the lamp of ſome lone lazar-houſe,
Which through the ſilent night the traveller ſpies
Upon his doubtful way.

Viol. Fie on ſuch images!
Thou ſhould'ſt have liken'd it to things more ſeemly.
Thou might'ſt have ſaid the peaſant's evening fire
That from his upland cot, thro' winter's gloom,
What time his wife their ev'ning meal prepares,

Blinks on the traveller's eye, and cheers his heart;
Or ſignal-torch, that from my Lady's bower
Tells wand'ring knights the revels are begun;
Or blazing brand, that from the vintage-houſe
O' long October nights, thro' the ſtill air
Looks rouſingly. ——— To have our gallant Beacon
Ta'en for a lazar houſe!

Baſt. Well, Maiden; as thou wilt: thy gentle Miſtreſs
Of all theſe things may chuſe what likes her beſt,
To paint more clearly how her noble fire
The diſtant ſeamen cheers, who bleſs the while
The hand that kindled it.

Aur. Shall I be bleſs'd ——
By wand'ring men returning to their homes?
By thoſe from ſhipwreck ſav'd, again to cheer
Their wives, their friends, their kindred? Bleſs'd by thoſe!
And ſhall it not a bleſſing call from heaven?
It will; my heart leaps at the very thought:
The ſeaman's bleſſing reſts upon upon my head
To charm my wand'rer home. ——
Heap on more wood:
Let it more brightly blaze. — Good Baſtiani,
Hie to thy taſk, and we'll aſſiſt thee gladly.

(*As they begin to occupy themſelves with the fire, the ſound of diſtant voices, ſinging in harmony, is heard under the ſtage as if aſcending the cliff.*)

Aur. What may it be?

Viol. The ſongs of paradiſe,
But that our ſavage rocks and gloomy night
So ill agree with peaceful ſoothing bliſs.

Ter. No bleſſed ſpirits in theſe evil days
Hymn, thro' the ſtilly darkneſs, ſtrains of grace.

Aur. Nay liſt; it comes again.

(*Voices heard nearer.*)

Ter. The mingled ſound comes nearer, and betrays
Voices of mortal men.

Viol. In ſuch ſweet harmony!
I never heard the like.

Aur. They muſt be good and holy who can utter
Such heavenly ſounds.

Baſi. I've ſurely heard before
This ſolemn chorus chaunted by the knights,
The holy brothers of Jeruſalem.
It is a carrol ſung by them full oft,
When ſaved from peril dire of flood or field.

Aur. The Knights of bleſt St. John from Paleſtine!
Alas! why feel I thus? knowing too well
They cannot bring the tidings I would hear.

(*Chorus riſes again very near.*)

Viol. Liſt, liſt! they've gain'd the ſummit of the cliff:
They are at hand; their voices are diſtinct;
Yea, ev'n the words they ſing.

(*A ſolemn Song or Hymn, ſung in harmony, heard without.*)

Men preſerv'd from ſtorm and tide
And fire and battle raging wide;
What ſhall ſubdue our ſteady faith,
Or of our heads a hair ſhall ſkathe?
Men preſerv'd, in gladneſs weeping,
Praiſe him, who hath alway our ſouls in holy keeping.

And whereſo'er in earth or ſea
Our ſpot of reſt at laſt ſhall be;
Our ſwords, in many a glorious field,
Surviving heroes ſtill ſhall wield,
While we our faithful toils are reaping
With him, who hath alway our ſouls in holy keeping.

(*Enter* ſix Knights of St. John of Jeruſalem *in proceſſion, with their followers behind them, who don't advance upon the ſtage, but remain partly conceal'd behind the rocks.*)

Aur. Speak to them, Baſtiani; thou'rt a ſoldier;
Thy mind is more compoſed. — I pray thee do.
(*Motioning* Baſt. *to accoſt them.*)

Baſt. This lady, noble Warriors, greets you all,
And offers you ſuch hoſpitality
As this late hour and ſcanty means afford.
Wilt pleaſe ye round this blazing fire to reſt?
After ſuch perilous toſſing on the waves,
You needs muſt be forſpent.

1ſt Knight. We thank you, Sir, and this moſt noble dame,

Whoſe Beacon hath from ſhipwreck ſav'd us. Driven
By adverſe winds too near your rocky coaſt,
Warn'd by its friendly light, we ſtood to ſea:
But ſoon diſcov'ring that our crazy bark
Had ſprung a dang'rous leak, we took our boat
And made for ſhore. The neareſt point of land
Beneath this cliff, with peril imminent,
By help of ſome good fiſhermen we gained;
And here, in God's good mercy, ſafe we are
With grateful hearts.

Aur. We praiſe that mercy alſo
Which hath preſerv'd you.

1ſt Knight. Lady, take our thanks.
And may the veſſel of that friend beloved,
For whom you watch, as we have now been told,
Soon to your ſhore its welcome freight convey.

Aur. Thanks for the wiſh; and may its prayers be heard.
Renowned men ye are; holy and brave;
In every field of honour and of arms
Some of your noble brotherhood are found:
Perhaps the valiant knights I now behold,
Did on that luckleſs day againſt the Souldain
With brave De Villeneuve for the croſs contend.
If this be ſo, you can, perhaps, inform me
Of one who in the battle fought, whoſe fate
Is ſtill unknown.

1ſt Knight. None of us all, fair Dame, ſo honour'd were
As in that field to be, ſave this young knight.
Sir Bertram, wherefore in thy mantle lapt,

Stand'ſt thou ſo far behind? Speak to him, Lady:
For in that battle he right nobly fought,
And may, belike, wot of the friend you mention'd.
Aur. (*going up eagerly to the young Knight*)
Did'ſt thou there fight? — then ſurely thou did'ſt know
The noble Ermingard, who from this iſle
With valiant Conrad went: ——
What fate had he upon that diſmal day?
Young Kt. Whate'er his fate in that fell fight might be,
He now is as the dead.
Aur. Is as the dead! ha! then he is not dead:
He's living ſtill. O tell me — tell me this!
Say he is ſtill alive; and tho' he breathe
In the foul peſt-houſe; tho' a wretched wand'rer,
Wounded and maim'd; yea, tho' his noble form
With chains and ſtripes and ſlav'ry be diſgraced,
Say he is living ſtill, and I will bleſs thee.
Thou know'ſt — full well thou know'ſt, but wilt not ſpeak.
What means that heavy groan? For love of God,
Speak to me!
(*Tears the mantle from his face, with which he had concealed it.*)
My Ermingard! My bleſſed Ermingard!
Thy very living ſelf reſtored again!
Why turn from me?
Er. Ah! call'ſt thou this reſtored?
Aur. Do I not graſp thy real living hand?
Dear, dear! — ſo dear! moſt dear! — my loſt, my found!

Thou turn'ſt and weep'ſt; art thou not ſo to me?

Er. Ah! would I were! alas, alas! I'm loſt: Sever'd from thee for ever.

Aur. How ſo? What mean ſuch words?

Erm. (*ſhaking his head, and pointing to the croſs on his mantle.*)
Look on this emblem of a holy vow
Which binds and weds me to a heavenly love:
We are, my ſweet Aurora, far divided;
Our bliſs is wreck'd for ever.

Aur. No; thou art ſtill alive, and that is bliſs.
Few moments ſince, what would I not have ſacrificed,
To know that in the lapſe of many years
I ſhould again behold thee? — I had been ——
How ſtrongly art thou moved! — Thou heed'ſt me not.

Ter. (*to* Aur.) Were it not better he ſhould leave this ſpot?
Let me conduct him to my quiet bower.
Reſt and retirement may compoſe his mind.

Aur. Aye, thou art right, Terentia.

Ter. (*to the other* Knights.) Noble Knights,
And theſe your followers! gentle Baſtiani
Will to a place of better comfort lead you,
Where ye ſhall find ſome hoſpitable cheer,
And couches for repoſe. — Have we your leave
That your companion be a little time
Ta'en from your company?

1ſt Knight. You have, good Lady;
Moſt readily we grant it. — Heaven be with you,

And this your lovely charge!
(*To* Baſt.) Sir, to your guidance
We yield ourſelves right gladly.

[Exeunt Knights, &c. *by a path between the rocks, and* Aurora *and* Ermingard, &c. *by another path.*)

SCENE II.

An Anti-room in the Houſe of Aurora: *Enter* Garcio, *beckoning the* Page, *who preſently enters by the oppoſite ſide.*

Gar. Come hither, little Friend, who did'ſt before
Serve me ſo willingly. Wilt thou from me
Bear to Sir Ermingard a friendly meſſage;
And ſay his old companion ——

Page. Nay, I dare not.
The holy legate and the pope beſides
Might not diſturb him now; for dame Terentia
Hath ſo decreed. He is in her apartment,
And yonder is the door.
(*Pointing off the ſtage.*)

Gar. From which ev'n now
I ſaw thee turn?

Page. I liſten'd not for harm.

Gar. Do I accuſe thee, Boy? Is he alone?
Or is thy Lady with him?

Page. That I know not.
Do folks groan heavieſt when they are alone?

Gar. Full oft' they do; for then without reſtraint
They utter what they feel.

Page. Then, by my beard, I think he be alone!
For as I flipp'd on tiptoe to the door,
I heard him groan ſo deeply!
Gar. Thou heard'ſt him groan?
Page. Aye; deeply.
I thought when he return'd, we ſhould be merry:
So ſtarting up at the good tidings, quickly
All darkling as I was, I don'd my cloaths:
But, by my beard! I'd go to bed again,
Did I not long moſt curiouſly to know
What will betide.
Gar. Speak ſoftly, Boy; thou, and thy beard to boot,
Will badly fare if Ulrick ſhould o'erhear thee.
I know his angry voice: he is at hand.
Page. Where ſhall I go? — He will not tarry here:
He will but paſs to the adjoining hall.
In this dark nook I'll hide me from his ſight
Leſt he ſhould chide me.
(*Retires behind the pillar.*)
Gar. Is there room for me?
He'll greet me too with little courteſy
If I remain to front him.
(*Retires behind the pillar alſo.*)

(*Enter* ULRICK *and* BASTIANI, *ſpeaking as they enter.*)

Ul. And ſtill thou ſay'ſt forbear!
Baſt. Paſs on, my Lord.
Ul. No, by the holy rood! I'll keep in ſight

Of that accurſed door which gave him entrance.
An hour's ſand well hath run, which undiſturb'd
They have in converſe or endearments ſpent.
And yet I muſt forbear!

Baſt. They have not told the truth who told you ſo;
It is not yet ſo long.

Ul. It is! it is!
I have within theſe walls, who for my ſervice
More faithfully have watch'd than Baſtiani —
Aye, or Terentia either.

Baſt. Wrong us not.
Since Ermingard returns by holy vows
So bound, that as a rival to your love,
You may, with honeſt thoughts of her you love,
No more conſider him; all jealouſy
Within your noble breaſt ſhould be extinct.
Then think not to diſturb theſe few ſhort moments
Of unavailing ſorrow; that were cruel.

Ul. Thou pitieſt others well; I am tormented,
And no one pities me. — That curſed Beacon!
I ſaid in vain this night ſhould be the laſt:
It was a night too much: the ſea had now
Roll'd o'er his lifeleſs corſe; I been at peace.

Baſt. For mercy, good my Lord! curb ſuch fell thoughts:
They bear no kindred to your better nature.

Ul. My better nature! Mock me not with words;
Who loves like me, no nature hath but one,

And that ſo keen —— Would the engulphing
waves
Had fifty fathom deep entombed him!

Baſt. Speak not ſo loud: paſs on; we are
within
The obſervation of a prying houſhould.
Paſs on, and preſently I'll bring you notice
Of what you would. I pray you ſtop not here!

(EXEUNT Ul. *and* Baſt. *while* Gar. *and*
Page *come from their concealment.*)

Page. He would have chid me ſhrewdly.

Gar. He is indeed an angry ruthleſs man,
And Baſtiani no ſlight taſk will have
To keep his wrath from miſchief. To the legate
I'll hie me ſtraight, and aſk his better counſel:
So fare thee well, ſweet Child.

Page. Nay, take me with you; I'm afraid to
ſtay.
I can my prayers and an Ave-Maria ſay,
The legate will not chide me.

Gar. Nay, ſtay behind; thou art ſecure, poor
Elph!
I'll ſoon return again.

[EXEUNT.

SCENE III.

The Apartment of TERENTIA: ERMINGARD *and* AURORA *are diſcovered with* TERENTIA, *who is withdrawn to a diſtance from them.* ERMINGARD *is ſeated with his Body thrown back, and his Face covered with both his Hands, while*

AURORA *ſtands by him in the Attitude of one who is entreating or ſoothing him.*

Erm. O ceaſe! Thy words, thy voice, thy hand on mine,
That touch ſo dearly felt, do but enhance
An agony too great. —— Untoward fate!
Thus to have loſt thee!

Aur. Say not, thou haſt loſt me.
Heaven will ſubdue our minds, and we ſhall ſtill,
With what is ſpar'd as from our wreck of bliſs,
Be happy.

Erm. Moſt unbleſt, untoward fate!
After that hapleſs battle, where in vain
I courted death, I kept my name conceal'd.
Ev'n brave De Villeneune, maſter of our Order,
When he received my vows, did pledge his faith
Not to declare it. Thus I kept myſelf
From all communication with theſe ſhores,
Perverſely forwarding my rival's will.
O blind and credulous fool!

Aur. Nay, do not thus upbraid thyſelf: Heaven will'd it.
Be not ſo keenly moved: there ſtill is left
What to the ſoul is dear — We'll ſtill be happy.

Erm. The chaſten'd pilgrim o'er his lady's grave
Sweet tears may ſhed, and may without reproach
Thoughts of his paſt love blend with thoughts of heaven.
He whom the treach'ry of ſome faithleſs maid
Hath robb'd of bliſs, may, in the ſturdy pride
Of a wrong'd man, the galling ill endure;

But fever'd thus from thee, ſo true, ſo noble,
By vows that all the ſoul's devotion claim,
It makes me feel — may God forgive the crime!
A very hatred of all ſaintly things.
Fool — raſh and credulous fool! to loſe thee thus!

Aur. Nay, ſay not ſo: thou ſtill art mine. Short while
I would have given my whole of life beſides
To've ſeen but once again thy paſſing form —
Thy face — thine eyes turn'd on me for a moment;
Or only to have heard thro' the ſtillair
Thy voice diſtinctly call me, or the ſound
Of thy known ſteps upon my lonely floor:
And ſhall I then, holding thy living hand
In love and honour, ſay, thou art not mine?

Erm. (*ſhaking his head*) This ſtate — this ſacred badge!

Aur. O no! that holy croſs upon thy breaſt
Throws ſuch a charm of valorous ſanctity
O'er thy lov'd form: my thoughts do forward glance
To deeds of ſuch high fame by thee achiev'd,
That ev'n methinks the bliſs of wedded love
Leſs dear, leſs noble is than ſuch ſtrong bonds
As may, without reproach, unite us ſtill.

Erm. O creature of a gen'rous conſtancy!
Thou but the more diſtracteſt me! — Fool, fool!
(*Starting from his ſeat, and pacing to and fro diſtractedly*)
Mean, miſbelieving fool! — I thought her falſe,

Cred'lous alone of evil: — I have loſt,
And have deſerv'd to loſe her.
Aur. Oh! be not thus! Have I no power to ſooth thee?
See, good Terentia weeps, and fain would try
To ſpeak thee comfort.
Ter. (*coming forward*) Aye; bethink thee well,
Moſt noble Ermingard, heaven grants thee ſtill
All that is truly precious of her love, —
Her true and dear regard.
Erm. Then heaven forgive my black ingratitude,
For I am moſt unthankful!
Ter. Nay conſider,
Her heart is thine: you are in mind united.
Erm. United! In the fartheſt nook o'th' earth
I may in lonely ſolitude reflect,
That in ſome ſpot — ſome happier land ſhe lives
And thinks of me. Is this to be united?
Aur. I cannot, in a Page's ſurtout clad,
Thy ſteps attend as other maids have done
To other Knights.
Erm. No, by the holy rood!
Thou can'ſt not, and thou ſhould'ſt not. Rather would I,
Dear as thou art, weep o'er thee in thy grave
Than ſee thee ſo degraded.
Aur. Hear me out,
I cannot ſo attend thee — noon and eve
Thy near companion be; but I have heard
That, near the ſacred houſes of your Order,

Convents of maids devout in Holy Land
Eſtabliſh'd are — maids who in deeds of charity
To pilgrims and to all in warfare maim'd,
In ſacred warfare for the holy croſs,
Are deem'd the humble partners of your zeal.

Erm. Aye, ſuch there are, but what availeth this?

Aur. There will I dwell, a vow'd and humble ſiſter.
We ſhall not far be ſever'd. The ſame winds
That do o' nights thro' your ſtill cloiſters ſigh,
Our quiet cells viſiting with mournful harmony,
Shall lull my pillow too. Our window'd towers
Shall ſometimes ſhew me on the neighbouring plains,
Amidſt thy brave companions, thy mail'd form
Creſted with glory, on thy pawing ſteed
Returning from the wars. And when at laſt
Thou art in ſickneſs laid — who will forbid
The dear ſad pleaſure — like a holy bride
I'll by thy-death bed ſtand, and look to heaven
Where all bleſſ'd union is. O! at the thought,
Methinks this ſpan of life to nothing ſhrinks,
And we are bleſſ'd already. Thou art ſilent:
Doſt thou deſpiſe my words?

Erm. O no! ſpeak to me thus: ſay what thou wilt:
I am ſubdued. And yet theſe burſting tears!
My heart is rent in twain: I fear — I fear
I am rebellious ſtill.

(*Kneeling, and taking both her hands be-*

tween his, and kiſſing them with great devotion.)

School me or chide me now: do what thou wilt:
I am reſign'd and humble.

Ter. (*advancing to them with alarm*)

Hear ye that noiſe without? — They force the door
And angry Ulrick comes.

Erm. (*ſtarting from his knees furiouſly*)

Thank heaven this hated rival front to front
Shall now oppoſe me! God avenge the right!

(*Enter* Ulrick, *burſting into the room, followed by* Baſtiani.)

Ul. (*to* Erm.) Vow'd holy Knight; from all vain earthly love
Pure and divided; in a lady's chamber
Do we ſurpriſe thee? Quit it inſtantly:
It is a place for thee unfit: and know,
In ſacred wardſhip will I keep that maid.

Erm. In ſacred wardſhip! O unbluſhing face!
What of thy baſeneſs, treachery and falſehood
I could declare, my choaking voice forbids,
Which utterance hath not. — Here's a ready tongue —

(*drawing his ſword*)

Defend thee then, and heaven defend the right!

(*They both draw and fight furiouſly*, Baſtiani *endeavouring in vain to interpoſe; when the* Legate *and his train with* Garcio *and the* Knights of St. John, *enter and ſeparate them.*)

Leg. Put up your weapons: to the holy church

This cauſe belongs, and to her high award
I charge you both that you in all humility
Submit. Lord Ulrick, to the Pope perforce
You muſt account of this your wardſhip give,
Or by yourſelf in perſon, or your deputy,
To Rome forthwith diſpatch'd.
(Ul. *bows ſullenly.*)
As for the lady, to my guardian care,
Till we before the holy Father come,
She muſt commit herſelf. And thou, Sir Ermingard
Shalt to the ſovereign Pontiff and the patron
Of thy moſt valiant order, fully ſhew
Wherein thou'ſt been aggriev'd. If the bleſſ'd croſs
Thou haſt aſſum'd, ſuppoſing other vows
That did before engage thee, were annull'd,
By falſe reports deceived; the holy Urban,
Our wiſe enlighten'd father, will, I truſt,
A diſpenſation grant, that ſhall empower thee
To do'ff with honour this thy ſacred mantle,
And in its ſtead a bridegroom's robe aſſume.
(Ermingard *and* Aurora *both embrace the* Legate's *knees, who raiſes them up gently.*)
It is enough; forbear, forbear, my Children;
I am too richly thank'd.
And now we muſt with ſober minds confer:
For when the wind is fair, we ſail for Rome.
Some days, perhaps, it may adverſely blow—
Perhaps ſome weeks; for I have known it oft
Hold veſſels bound.

Aur. (*toſſing up her arms joyfully as ſhe ſpeaks.*)
No; it will change to-morrow.

Erm. Dear ardent Soul! can'ſt thou command the winds?

(Aur. *ſhrinks back aſhamed.*)

Leg. Bluſh not, ſweet Maid; nor check thy ardent thoughts;
That gen'rous buoyant ſpirit is a power
Which in the virtuous mind doth all things conquer.
It bears the hero on to arduous deeds:
It lifts the ſaint to heaven.

(*Curtain drops.*)

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